



“I Did Not Have...”

The Interaction Between Politics And Media Regarding Sex Scandals

After months of denials, Clinton tells nation, grand jury of 'inappropriate' relationship with Monica Lewinsky

COVERAGE BEGINS ON PAGES 2 & 3

Lisa van Meegen

09004297

European Studies 4-4E

R. Rawal

21 May 2013

**School of European Studies
The Hague University of Applied Sciences**

Executive summary

On 26 January 1998, during a press conference in the White House, President Bill Clinton famously told the nation, "I did not have sexual relations with that woman, Miss Lewinsky" (Clinton, 1998). Now, 15 years later, almost everyone can still recall those famous words. In this dissertation, the interaction between politics and media regarding sex scandals in the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States is examined. A political sex scandal involves the public disclosure of activities of politicians that go beyond the generally accepted norms or codes governing the behaviour of sexual relations (Thompson, 2000). The main hypothesis in this dissertation is how sex scandals are exposed per country, illustrates the interaction between politics and media. The examined cases require several conditions. Firstly, all scandals used concern a sexual scandal, that in one way or another transgress the boundaries of sexual conduct. Secondly, the persons concerned in the sex scandals are politicians; whether it is local, regional or national. Another important condition is that the media attention had to be national. Lastly, all sex scandals take place in the time period, from 1990 through 2013.

In the second chapter the focus lies on the characteristics of and main developments in the political landscape in each of the countries. An important observation is that in each of the countries there is a growing emphasis on the personal lives of politicians instead of political content, but the personalisation of politics has not evolved to the same point in each of the countries. The third chapter describes the characteristics of and main developments in the media landscape in each of the countries. An important finding is that media logic is a driving mechanism on reporting about politics and politicians. The result of this is that news has a growing emphasis on the politicians themselves. The focus of the fourth chapter lies more specifically on the relationship between politics and media in each of the countries. An important conclusion is that media and politics need and use each other; they both gain from each other's presence and they both have instruments with which they try to influence each other. The fifth chapter centres on the interaction between politics and media regarding sex scandals, while using different phases through which scandals are exposed. With this approach, it is explained why in each of the countries a different phase gets more attention from politics and media. This can be caused by the specific development of the political and media landscape in each country, because the focus on one phase or the other is a specific illustration of the interaction between politics and media in that country.

It seems that in the Netherlands only the phase of the culmination is important. The cases of De Vries and Oudkerk show that the newspapers and television programmes were interested from the

moment the news of the scandal was confirmed and their interest diminished as soon as the two politicians were open about their affairs. This is mainly due to the existence of quality press in the Netherlands, when compared to the United Kingdom and the United States. It can also be explained by the informal contacts between politicians and journalists in the Netherlands, which are a lot closer than in the other two countries. Another important factor is the political culture in the Netherlands, in which the politician himself is less important. This can be explained by the differences in the electoral systems.

In the United Kingdom the media seems focused mainly on the phase of the scandal proper. This might be explained by the important role the popular press has in the United Kingdom, as well as the celebrity culture. The emphasis on the gossip and rumours surrounding the personal lives of politicians is a result of the existing rigid class system in the United Kingdom. People like to read about the successes, failures and downfall of public figures. The coverage of the phase of the scandal proper is quite extensive in the United Kingdom as the case studies show. This is not surprising, because gossip sells and the ratings have become more important. A second important factor is the electoral system; politicians want to be visible for the people in their constituency.

It seems that in the United States, as in the United Kingdom, the trustworthiness of the individual politicians is also the most important factor. This might be due to the similarities in their political system, but there are some important differences. For example, the popular press is not as important in the United States. This can be explained by the greater belief in the possibility of social mobility in the United States: the American Dream. This belief is cultivated by stories about self-made people in infotainment programmes. The focus in these programmes lies more on the rise of these people than on their fall. It seems that in the media, but also in the political domain, the main focus is on the phase of the culmination. Therefore, it is discussed in what way the politician can be held accountable for his or her actions and what consequences there will be.

It is not likely that the emphasis on and importance of sex scandals in the interaction between politics and media will diminish in the coming years. Sex scandals will probably grow in importance, because in favour of ratings the media will look for new scandals: sex sells. There is also a chance that the interaction between politics and media regarding sex scandals will become similar in the three countries. The growing internationalisation will play an important role, as will the growing emphasis on the personal lives of politicians in all of the three countries. In the next few years, the dawn of social media will also play a key role in the way sex scandals are exposed. Social media can change the way politics and media interact with each other, like one of the cases will show, but the broader implications are still unclear.

Acknowledgments

This dissertation is a result of four years of studying. Four important years of my life that I would not have wanted to miss for the world. I want to thank my supportive parents. They are always there for me and believe in me. Also, I want to thank Boudewijn Steur for his love, enthusiasm, patience and creative ideas that supported me throughout writing this dissertation. Furthermore, the topic of this dissertation would not exist if it were not for the inspiring classes of R. Rawal. Actually, this whole dissertation would not be what it is now without their instructions, advice, ideas and books. I am very grateful.

Lisa van Meegen

21 May 2013

Table of contents

Executive summary	i
Acknowledgments	iii
1. Introduction	1
2. Characteristics of the political landscape and its main developments	3
2.1 Characteristics of the political landscape in each country	3
2.1.1 The Netherlands	3
2.1.2 The United Kingdom	5
2.1.3 The United States	5
2.2 Main political developments	7
2.2.1 Changing society	7
2.2.2 Changing politics	7
3. Characteristics of the media landscape and its main developments	9
3.1 Characteristics of the media landscape in each country	9
3.1.1 The Netherlands	9
3.1.2 The United Kingdom	10
3.1.3 The United States	11
3.2 Main developments in the media landscape	11
3.2.1 Media logic and mediazation	12
3.2.2 Digitalisation of the news	12
4. The interaction between politics and media	14
4.1 The role and influence of media on politics	14
4.2 The role and influence of politics on media	15
4.3 The interaction between politics and media in the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States	18
4.3.1 The Netherlands	18
4.3.2 The United Kingdom	19
4.3.3 The United States	19
5. The interaction between politics and media regarding sex scandals	21
5.1 The characteristics of a sex scandal and the four phases in which a sex scandal is exposed	21
5.2 The pre-scandal phase	22
5.2.1 The Netherlands	23
5.2.2 The United Kingdom	23
5.2.3 The United States	24
5.3 The phase of the scandal proper	25
5.3.1 The Netherlands	25
5.3.2 The United Kingdom	26
5.3.3 The United States	27
5.4 The culmination	29
5.4.1 The Netherlands	29
5.4.2 The United Kingdom	30
5.5 The aftermath	32
5.5.1 The Netherlands	32
5.5.2 The United Kingdom	33
5.5.3 The United States	33
5.6 Comparison between the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States	34

6. Conclusion	36
7. References	39
Appendix I Personal telephone conversation	44
Appendix II Personal e-mails	48
Appendix III Online Questionnaire	57
Appendix IV Tables	60
Appendix V Graphics	61
Appendix VI Ephorus check	64

1. Introduction

“I did not have sexual relations with that woman, Miss Lewinsky. I never told anybody to lie, not a single time. Never. These allegations are false”

(Clinton, 26 January 1998, White House press conference)

On 26 January 1998, during a press conference in the White House, President Bill Clinton famously told the nation, "I did not have sexual relations with that woman, Miss Lewinsky" (Clinton, 1998). Now, 15 years later, almost everyone can still recall those famous words. “Thanks to the development of communication media, politicians and other public figures are much more visible today than they were in the past” (Thompson, 2000, preface).

In this dissertation, the interaction between politics and media regarding sex scandals in the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States is examined. In the last few decades the interaction between politics and media has been thoroughly discussed, mainly because of the consequences of the rise of mass media. The main hypothesis in this dissertation is how sex scandals are exposed per country illustrates the interaction between politics and media. After all, sex scandals are an exception to the normal way politics and media interact. Therefore, sex scandals show other characteristics and boundaries of this interaction. Sex scandals in three different countries are researched, because that will show the differences in the way politics and media interact. Normally research of this interaction shows the similarities between countries and focuses on the general developments that take place in all of the countries. The research in this dissertation focuses mainly on the differences instead of the similarities, and tries to explain where these differences originate.

A political sex scandal involves the public disclosure of activities of politicians, beyond the generally accepted norms or codes governing the behaviour of sexual relations (Thompson, 2000). For this dissertation numerous sex scandals have been examined. The cases examined illustrate the interaction between politics and media using several conditions. Firstly, all scandals used concern a sexual scandal that in one way or another transgress the boundaries of sexual conduct. Secondly, the persons concerned in the sex scandals are persons in the political administration; whether it is local, regional or national. Another important condition is that the media attention was national. Lastly, all sex scandals take place in the time period from 1990 through 2013.

The central question this dissertation is, ‘how do politics and media interact regarding sex scandals in the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States?’ This main question is answered with the help of four sub-questions. The first sub-question is: ‘what are the characteristics of and main developments in the political landscape? Secondly, ‘what are the characteristics of the media landscape and its main developments? Thirdly, ‘what is the interaction between politics and media?’ Lastly, ‘what is the interaction between politics and media regarding sex scandals?’

In order to answer the above-mentioned central question and sub questions, both desk and field research have been conducted. The desk research was conducted, using academic and reliable quality resources, such as articles and books to draw up the theoretical framework. In addition to this form of research, field research was conducted. Several media experts were consulted, such as Dick Pels (Professor Sociology) and Marc Chavannes (Professor Journalism). Moreover, Karen Zandbergen (Chief Editor Politics *Trouw*), Jeroen Visser (Editor Politics *De Volkskrant*) and Guus Valk (Political Correspondent *NRC*) were able to answer several questions. Rob Oudkerk and Jack de Vries were also asked to cooperate, but both did not want to do that. A questionnaire was conducted among 54 Dutch citizens regarding their media habits. The tables and figures relating to the chapters can be found in the Appendix.

In the next chapter, the focus lies on the characteristics of and main developments in the political landscape in each of the countries. Chapter Three consist of the characteristics and main developments for the media landscape per country. The main findings of Chapter Two and Three are combined in Chapter Four. In this chapter the main focus is the interaction between media and politics in the three countries. In the fifth chapter, the interaction between media and politics is showed regarding sex scandals. In the conclusion and last chapter, the central question is answered using the main findings.

2. Characteristics of the political landscape and its main developments

To understand the way politics and media interact with each other in relation to political scandals one must first understand both the characteristics and main developments of the political landscape in each of the countries. In this chapter the focus is on the electoral system and the position and role of the political parties. The reason for this is, as the political thinker Dahl (2000) wrote, “no political institutions shape the political landscape of a democratic country more than its electoral system and its political parties” (p. 130). The hypothesis is that in electoral systems where politicians themselves, and not the political party or political issues, are the centre of attention, sex scandals have a dominant role in the media attention. Therefore, it is examined in the first paragraph, in which of the countries politicians themselves seem to be more important than parties or certain political issues. In the second paragraph, the most striking developments are examined within each of the political landscapes per country. Therefore, remarks are made as to way the structure of the political system, as described in the first paragraph, works in practice. In this paragraph it is discussed if either politicians or political parties and their political issues are becoming more important than the other.

2.1 Characteristics of the political landscape in each country

In this paragraph the institutional political structure of the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States is examined. These institutional structures, like the electoral system, are determinative for the importance of politicians themselves in the three democracies. Therefore, in political systems with proportional representation, political parties and the party leaders are, at least in theory, the most important, while in systems with single-member districts the individual politicians are accountable at the end of each term (Heywood, 2002).

2.1.1 The Netherlands

The Netherlands is a constitutional monarchy, in which the Monarch is the Head of State and the Prime Minister the Head of Government. The Dutch Parliament together with the government is the legislative body and consists of two chambers: the House of Representatives and the Senate. The House of Representatives consists of 150 seats and is directly elected by the Dutch electorate. The Senate consists of 75 senators and is elected by the members of the provincial councils within three months after the elections for the latter and takes place every four years. The Dutch electorate has a positive image of politicians, according to the questionnaire (Appendix V, figure 3). A

politician is seen as ambitious (25 %) and someone who looks after your interest (25 %), while just 2 % thinks of a politician as someone who abuses its position for money.

The Dutch electoral system is based on proportional representation. Proportional representation is a concept in voting systems used to elect an assembly or council. This differs with the electoral systems in the United Kingdom and the United States. Proportional representation means that the number of seats won by a party or group of candidates is proportionate to the number of votes received. Members of the Parliament each represent a political party. According to this system, a Dutch politician cannot be seen only as individual, but belongs strongly to a political party. If a politician wants to get re-elected, it is less important what the electorate feels, but very important what a politician's status within the political party is. This is because the chances to get into the House of Representatives depends on how high a politician's position is on an electoral ballot. This is different from systems that have to get a majority within a district or constituency, like in the United States and the United Kingdom. Therefore, the image of the politician is less important in the Netherlands (except for the party leader) than the political party as a whole.

The Netherlands has a multi-party system with 11 political parties in Parliament at this moment. In the Dutch political system a political party has little chance of gaining power alone, and parties are forced to work with each other to form coalition governments. All these political parties have different thoughts and ideals, but there are six significant ideologies where the parties can adapt. These ideologies are the liberals, social democrats, Christian democrats, populist left, populist right and the social liberals. The Second Chamber is elected by a national party-list system of proportional representation. There is no threshold for getting a seat, making it possible for a party to get a seat with only two-thirds of the vote. Since this system was implemented in 1918, no party has ever approached the seats needed for an outright majority. However, there is a broad consensus on the basic principles of the political system, and all parties must adjust their goals to some extent in order to have a realistic chance at being part of the government.

In the last few decades the individual politicians have become more important in the Netherlands, as is argued more in depth in the next paragraph. This has raised the question in the Netherlands whether or not the current electoral system still represents modern society. A few political parties have therefore argued that the Netherlands should also introduce an electoral system in which the relation between the represented and the representative should be strengthened, like the British and American voters have in their first-past-the-post system.

2.1.2 The United Kingdom

The United Kingdom is a constitutional monarchy, in which the Monarch is the Head of State and the Prime Minister the Head of Government. The British Parliament is the supreme legislative body and the highest authority in the United Kingdom. The British Parliament is bicameral. This means there are two houses or chambers. In the United Kingdom the two different Houses are the House of Commons and the House of Lords (“Politics,” 2013, “Government”, para. 1). The House of Commons is the Lower House in which the citizens of the United Kingdom elect 650 Members of Parliament (MPs) to represent their interests and concerns. The House of Lords is the Upper House.

The British electoral system is based on the first-past-the-post system. Under first-past-the-post, the United Kingdom or local authority is divided into numerous voting areas, the so-called constituencies. The candidate that has received the most votes is elected to represent the constituency. The United Kingdom is currently divided into 650 parliamentary constituencies, each of which is represented by one MP in the House of Commons. Although constituencies vary widely in area, the average number of voters in each constituency is approximately 68,175. After four years with new elections, the MPs have to account to their electorate in their district what they have done in the last period. Therefore it is important for the candidate to pay attention to its attitude so he or she will be elected or do a good job being a MP. This is different when comparing to the Dutch system, because an MP of the United Kingdom is more individually concerned than a Dutch MP. Nevertheless, the system in the United Kingdom is comparable to the system of the United States that will be explained in the next part.

As a result of the electoral system in the United Kingdom there are only a few parties represented in Parliament. The main three political parties are Conservative, Labour and Liberal Democrat (“U.K. Government,” 2013, “The party system”, para. 2). These three are represented in both the House of Commons and House of Lords. Since the last elections, the United Kingdom has a coalition government, consisting of the Conservative Party and the Liberal Democrats. During the last elections, the Liberal Democrats had a huge electoral victory, which made their participation to the current government possible. One of their demands, however, was the introduction of a proportional system in the United Kingdom, though what other political parties also have their chance of getting represented in government.

2.1.3 The United States

The United States is a federal constitutional republic. The legislative power is the Congress. The Congress consists of the Senate and the House of Representatives. The Senate has 100 seats, two

for each state. The members of the Senate are elected for six years. The House of Representatives consists of 435 members. Each state receives the number of representatives in proportion to the population of the state concerned. However, each state receives at least one seat. These members are elected for two years. The President has the executive power. The President is elected indirectly in the United States. The Electoral College officially elects the American President. Each state has a number of electors that is based on the population in the Electoral College. Who gets the most votes per state, ‘wins’ in principle all electors of that State (the principle of the district system). Whoever has the most electoral votes wins the election and becomes President.

The United States House of Representatives consists of 435 voting members. Each member is elected directly by the voters of his or her Congressional District within the state he or she serves. This is the same as in the United Kingdom, but there are some differences. American representatives serve a two-year term of office, and all 435 seats come up for election at once, in even-numbered years. This means that the representatives are actually always campaigning for the next election. This is a big difference in comparison to the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. The United States manages a majority system: the representative must receive a relative majority in the concerned district (the first-past-the-post system). For a representative, its image is important if one wants to be re-elected. The individual representative is accountable for what they have achieved at the end of its term. So, American politicians are accountable and responsible for their own actions, apart from the political system and a political party.

In the United States, two major political parties, namely the Republicans and the Democrats, dominate the federal and state governments. There are several other smaller parties, but they have very little influence on national politics, mainly because they are also not represented in the House of Representatives. This is a result of the electoral system in the United States. In this way there is a similarity to the United Kingdom, in which there are just a few parties represented in the House of Commons. Nevertheless, there is also a huge difference to the latter, because of the more or less directly chosen president. This makes the emphasis in the American system on the individual persons more strongly (McAllister, 2005).

2.2 Main political developments

Not only the institutional structure determines the growing importance of the individual politicians: the so-called personalisation of politics, but it is also necessary to look at the important political developments. The three countries are not analysed separately, because most developments took place in all three of the countries. This is due to the internationalization of politics; Western cultures are getting similar to each other and the national differences are reducing. Trends in politics, which can be seen in the United States or the United Kingdom, are also reflected in the political landscape in the Netherlands (D. Pels, personal interview, April 26, 2013; Schnabel, 2000). In this paragraph some aspects for the three countries will be accentuated.

2.2.1 Changing society

Society is changing. One after the other social, political, economic and technological developments follow each other in quick succession (Elchardus, 2002). Professor Schnabel has identified two relevant key developments for the growing importance of persons in politics, namely individualisation and informalisation (Schnabel, 2000).

Individualisation is “the on going process of reduced dependence of the individual, of one or more persons in his immediate environment and of the increasing freedom of choice with regard to the organisation of their own lives” (Schnabel, 2000, p. 22). This means that people are less traditionally bound to or member of a political party on the basis of their socio-economic background. This has the consequence that politicians have to ‘fight’ for the votes of these people.

The second trend, Schnabel notices, is the informalisation in society. According to him, this leads to the loosening of manners between people and the decline of the authority of certain professions, such as doctors, lawyers and politicians. A striking example was the discussion between Ali B. and Prime Minister Jan Peter Balkenende on 18 October 2006 in the Dutch talkshow ‘*Pauw and Witteman*’. Ali B. was on first-name terms with the Prime Minister throughout the whole interview. In the weeks after the talk show, there were a lot of discussions in the traditional media. In the 2000s, politicians have not tried to retake their traditional position of authority, but rather tried to tie in with the rest of society. This also means that politicians are judged by the way they are ‘performing’ and not so much for their political ideas.

2.2.2 Changing politics

Also in the political domain there are some important developments. In the first place, the growing visibility of politicians is pointed to, mainly due to the development of communication media – of

which is written about extensively in the next chapter. As a result of this growing visibility the personal lives of politicians have become more important. This makes politicians more vulnerable for scandals, because they need this visibility to gain support from the electorate. The electorate judges everything politicians do, so political parties select their candidates on the basis of their integrity and trustworthiness. If individual politicians do get involved with a scandal, their political party will not back them, because the (electoral) costs of backing the politician could be too high (D. Pels, personal interview, April 26, 2013).

A second development concerns the transition from ‘ideological politics’ towards a ‘politics of trust’, which is due to the individualisation in society. People are less bound by ideological based parties and choose more on the basis of the trustworthiness of politicians. The integrity of politicians is becoming more and more a weapon in the struggle for electoral advantage. Thompson (2000) states: “questions of character become increasingly politicized as parties struggle to differentiate themselves in a context where it is more and more difficult to appeal to fundamental differences of principle, and where, partly in order to compensate for this, parties and their leaders seek more and more to make political capital out of the character failings of others” (p. 113). In the United States and the United Kingdom the emphasis on character flaws of politicians already existed since the beginning of modern democracy, while in the Netherlands this has become a new phenomenon in the last three decades.

A third and final development that needs to be mentioned, concerns the so-called crisis of representation. In the past, political parties and their politicians represented homogeneous groups in society. Nowadays, society has become heterogeneous and it has become hard, if not impossible, for political parties to represent individuals in society. Furthermore, in this age of digital communication, i.e. the possibilities of Internet, it is possible to have a direct democracy, in which the electorate itself can make political decisions. In all three countries there are a growing number of initiatives of direct democracy (Heywood, 2002). This crisis of representation also contributes to the vulnerability of politicians.

3. Characteristics of the media landscape and its main developments

To understand the way politics and media interact with each other in relation to political scandals one must understand both the characteristics and main developments of the media landscape in each of the countries. In this chapter the focus lies on the characteristics of the different types of media per country: television and newspapers. This is relevant because in the last decades of the last century television and newspapers, and therefore journalists, monopolized public opinion about politics. Journalists have, according to Pierre Bourdieu (1998), “a monopoly on the large-scale informational instruments of production and diffusion of information” (p.46). In the second part of this chapter the main developments in the media landscape, are examined. This is important because journalism has changed in the last years, mainly because of the pressure of the ratings. “The race of audience share”, as Bourdieu puts it, “brings blood, sex, melodrama and crime to the headlines and to the beginning of the television news” (p.17). A second important development concerns the digitalization of the news.

3.1 Characteristics of the media landscape in each country

In this paragraph, the focus lies on the main characteristics of the media landscape in each of the three countries. These are the characteristics that have been most dominant in the way news has been covered in the last decades. These characteristics have been shaped through the particular culture and history of each of the countries. This way, there are comparisons by the way politics have been developed in these countries in the past.

3.1.1 The Netherlands

The main source for newsgathering in the Netherlands has been the newspapers and television programmes. The first was the most important source for many years, but, for years, there has been a fall in the number of people who receive their daily news via newspapers. In a study of the *Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek* ([CBS], 2009) is written, the gathering of news through newspapers decreased from 65 % in 2000 to 59 % in 2007. More recent figures are not available, but given the developments in the other countries as can be read later, it may be assumed that this percentage has dropped even more. The results from the questionnaire support this development. It shows (Appendix IV, Table 1) that in recent years, news Web sites and television gained ground upon newspapers. Dutch citizens spend quite some time gathering news. According to the questionnaire, 61 % spend less than two hours a week, 37 % spend two to five hours a week, and 2

% spend more than ten hours a week on the gathering of news. The topics they are most interested in are national politics (31 %), human interest (27 %) and world politics (24 %) (Appendix V, figure 2).

The Dutch newspapers can particularly be characterised as quality press. This is mainly due to the specific past of Dutch society, which was divided in four pillars (catholic, protestant, socialist and liberal). Each of these pillars had its own newspaper and public broadcasting organisation. All of these newspapers wanted to give their followers quality news. For this reason popular press never really developed in the Netherlands (Kennedy, 2010). The largest newspapers are *De Telegraaf*, *Algemeen Dagblad* and *De Volkskrant*. Although, a tabloid culture as in the United Kingdom, never existed in the Netherlands; there is a tradition of weekly tabloid, which is also the case in the United States. The television landscape of the Netherlands is divided into public broadcasting and commercial channels, although the difference between the two types in the Netherlands is not very huge. That Dutch public broadcasting channels focus more on serious, objective news coverage instead of spectacular, attractive news coverage by commercial channels is illustrated by the annual report of *Stichting KijkOnderzoek*. This annual report shows that the nonfiction content i.e. news coverage and current affairs programmes of public broadcasting in the Netherlands, has an average of 57,6 % in comparison to the commercial channels which has an average of 51,3 %. When looking at amusement programmes, the percentage for public broadcasting has an average of 4,2 % and for the commercial channels this is 5,8 % (*Stichting KijkOnderzoek* [SKO], 2013, p. 30). It could be said that the television programmes rather focus on serious news items than on sensational news items.

3.1.2 The United Kingdom

In the United Kingdom, a clear separation between the popular press and the quality press exists. According to the explanation of Scheller (2000), the first type focuses mainly on political events and themes, while the second pays particular attention to human-interest stories. Different than in the United States and the Netherlands, is the fact that most of the English newspapers can be counted as popular press. The largest newspapers include *The Sun*, *The Daily Mail* and the *Daily Mirror*, all of which can be considered to the popular press. These newspapers focus mainly on the reporting of sensational crimes, astrology and gossip. *The Times* and *The Guardian* can be counted among the quality press and are also highly regarded internationally. Another trend in the United Kingdom are blogging journalists that do this alongside their articles in the newspapers. A result of this is that the news providing gets a lot faster. Pels explains that the tabloidization in the United Kingdom has its history partly in the system of the class society. “The bond between the different classes, namely upper and low class, is very distanced. Once someone belongs to the lower class it

is hard to be ever part of the upper class. This results in a huge interest for people that are famous or for the ones that make it happen to burst through and become famous” (D. Pels, personal interview, April 26, 2013). Therefore, it could be said that people from the lower class are more interested in the ins and outs from the upper class and that is why there are so many tabloids.

3.1.3 The United States

In recent decades the most important way for people to receive news in the United States is through television. While print sources have suffered readership losses in recent years, television news viewership has remained more stable. Currently, 55 % say they watched the news or a news program on television yesterday (Pew Research Centre, 2012). Typical for American news programmes is the mix of information and entertainment, where human-interest stories are always very important. “National surveys document that around 10 % of Americans get information about national politics from late-night entertainment shows such as the *Tonight Show* starring Jay Leno and *Late Night with David Letterman*” (West & Orman, 2003, p.100). Furthermore, they state that media came to be dominated by infotainment shows such as *People Magazine*, *US Today*, *Inside Edition* and *Entertainment Tonight*. Such programmes underline how interesting politicians are and that they have many hidden stories just like other famous people in celebrity gossip (West & Orman, 2003, p.13). Although this may sound just like the gossip and rumours oriented press in the United Kingdom, there are some important differences. The class stratification in the United Kingdom as Pels mentioned in the above paragraph is quite rigid and people experience it as such. In the United States, however, there is still a huge belief in the American Dream, the possibility of social mobility by hard working. This belief is cultivated by stories about self-made persons in the infotainment programmes. The focus in these programmes is more about the rise of these persons than on their fall.

3.2 Main developments in the media landscape

Over time, the media landscape has changed. Media have become, more and more, an important factor in today’s society. For this transition a set of three developments are notable that can be adapted to all countries, and therefore, the three countries are not analysed separately. People nowadays want instant satisfaction of their need for the ‘news of the day’ when they watch television or read newspapers. Therefore, the public sphere is increasingly submitted to media logic. Media logic is the first development explained in this part. Secondly, the introduction of social media as important upcoming news source is underlined. This will permanently change the way people gather and produce news.

3.2.1 Media logic and mediazation

In the present society, news is broadcasted 24/7. It is not unnoticed that competitors in this branch are doing their very best to distinguish from each other in order to get the best ratings. These days, there are fewer boundaries to reach this goal than before (Wijnberg, 2012). The effect of this is called media logic. It is not about the content anymore, but it is the media logic that controls. From a study of Strömback, media logic refers to (as cited in Jonker, 2013) “the news values and the storytelling techniques the media make use of to take advantage of their own medium and its format, and to be competitive in the on going struggle to capture people’s attention”. Or, to put it in different words, media logic means that the media take advantage of their own instruments to control a story in such way that it has enough news value to reach and retain the audience, as long as it results in higher ratings. An important characteristic of media logic is the personalisation: the need to be able to identify with a key player. It differs per country, to what extend media logic controls. For example, in the United Kingdom the tabloids will faster cross a line to capture attention than in the Netherlands and the United States. Nevertheless, results from the questionnaire show that 87 % think that media have a stake in the developments regarding political sex scandals (Appendix V, figure 5). According to Hjarvards study, mediazation refers to two interlinked processes (as cited in Jonker, 2013): “the institutionalisation of the media and the increasing influence of the media on other institutions”. In addition, Heywood states also that media have become increasingly more powerful political actors and are nowadays more enmeshed in the political process (Heywood, 2002, p.202).

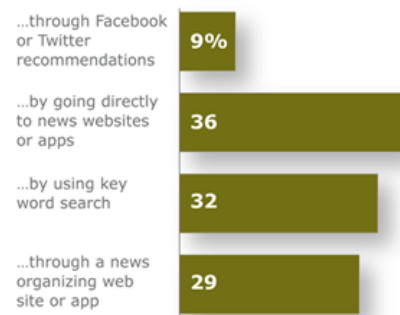
3.2.2 Digitalisation of the news

The digitalisation of news will permanently change the way people gather and produce news, but for the present, the importance of the digitalisation of news must be nuanced. In this part, the focus first lies on the gathering of news. Besides the function of social media as a social platform, it also changed into an important news source. The Pew Research Center (2012) found that perhaps the most dramatic change in the news environment has been the rise of social networking sites. “The percentage of Americans saying they saw news or news headlines on a social networking site yesterday has doubled from 9% to 19% since 2010 (p.3). From my own experience I can say that I also receive my news from social media Web sites and particularly from Facebook. I read, for example, on Facebook that Margaret Thatcher passed away. Social media also played an important role during the Arab Spring. Kassim (2012) writes that it is important to understand that social media did not cause the Arab Spring, but played an important role in the communication about it. Nevertheless, research from the Pew Research Center (2012) shows that “social media are additional paths to news, but not replacements for more traditional ones”. In the same study it is

written that, 9 % of digital news consumers frequently follow news recommendations from Facebook or Twitter. “That compares with more than a third, 36 %, who very often go directly to news organisations on one of their devices, 32 % who get news from search very often, and 29 % who turn to some sort of news organizer site or app” (Mitchell, Rosenstiel & Christian, 2012). This still trails by a large margin other ways of getting news. Namely, 92 % goes directly to news websites and 85 % use key word search. Regarding social media, research shows that also in the Netherlands Facebook and Twitter are not only being used as instruments to maintain social networks, but also for gathering information and news (Motivation, 2013). Where social media seemed to be in transition two years ago, nowadays it really became part of the Dutch daily lives. The reputation remains high (97 %) and the number of people that have a profile on at least one of the networks has increased from 89 % to 93 %. Moreover, almost all politicians, nowadays, use social media (Masters of Media).

Social media is not an overwhelming driver of news (yet)

Percent of U.S. adults who get news on any digital device very often...



N=3,016

PEW RESEARCH CENTER'S PROJECT FOR EXCELLENCE IN JOURNALISM
2012 STATE OF THE NEWS MEDIA

The second point concerns the production of the news. In the past, news was made by journalists and read by people. Nowadays, everyone can contribute to the production of news. If someone comes across with something newsworthy it can simply be posted on Twitter or Facebook and it will become a news item. One of the advantages of social media is, that a message is spread and shared very fast. A downside here is that it becomes, as can be read in Chapter Five, very hard to remove something from the Internet the moment it appears online. Others can immediately pick up a, by accident sent message or picture, that went online. This makes people, and thus politicians, vulnerable.

4. The interaction between politics and media

With the political system discussed in Chapter Two and the media landscape described in Chapter Three, this chapter is about the interaction between politics and media and the main characteristics of this interaction. This chapter shows that the relationship between media and politics involves action and reaction. Politicians and the media ultimately compete in favour of respectively the voter and the user. Media and politics deal with the so-called 'prisoner's dilemma'. Both are not able to back out or quit, because all others keep participating. To show this, the role and influence of the media on politics is explained first. In the second part, the role and influence of politics on the media is characterised. In the last part, the focus lies on the differences between the three countries regarding this topic.

4.1 The role and influence of media on politics

To answer how the role and influence of the media on politics can be characterised, the different political themes are examined and how they get attention in the media. For the central question it is important to know if the media is mainly interested in political items or in politicians themselves. If the emphasis is mainly on the latter it is also expected sex scandals will dominate the news more, and therefore, will have a bigger impact on the relationship between politics and media. Furthermore, in this chapter it is examined if news items in the media influenced the political agenda.

As McNair (2007) states, “the media report on and analyse political activity, but they are also part of it, available as a resource for political actors and their advisers” (p.43). Heywood (2002) underlines this by stating “mass media have been recognized as politically significant since the advent of mass literacy and the popular press in the late nineteenth century. However, it is widely accepted through a combination of social and technological changes, that media have become increasingly more powerful political actors and, in some respects more deeply enmeshed in the political process” (p. 202). In today’s society, news is broadcasted 24/7. It is not unnoticed that competitors in this branch are doing their very best to distinguish themselves from each other in order to get the best ratings. These days, there are fewer boundaries to reach this goal than before. This is due to media logic, as defined in the previous chapter. The media do not only transmit the messages of politicians to the public, but they transform them through various processes of news making and interpretation. What a politician wishes to say is not necessarily what media report as having said. The media make statements about politics in their own right, in the form of commentaries, editorials and interview questions. These statements may have a significant impact on the wider political environment (McNair, 2007, p.43). In addition, in

recent years individual politicians became more important than the political parties or movements, as will be described in the next part. Therefore, media can picture a politician the way they want. They make sure that the individual politicians appear more often in the news and therefore the integrity of the politicians becomes more important. “The issue of integrity is crucial to political leadership. In the new dispensation the issue integrity has dramatically risen in importance. Taken at face value it seems to be the intent of the constitution that the issue of integrity in political leadership become one of the top voting considerations” (“Politics, Elections and Integrity”, 2012). When a politician is involved in a scandal, the media exposes this. This results in the impeachment of the politician’s integrity. The risen importance of personal integrity has a great effect, as shown in the next chapter, on the relationship between politics and media concerning sex scandals.

Another way how media can shape politics is through ‘sound bites’. A sound bite is a brief statement, as by a politician, taken from an audiotape or videotape and broadcast especially during a news report. Such a short item is perfect to show that one blunder or a one-liner, made by a politician can flog a subject to death. Nowadays, this sound bite format is also used in the election debates. For example, a politician only gets three minutes to explain a spearhead of the election program and an opponent only gets one minute to react on this topic. The media are caring less for expectations of politics and look very different at their public responsibilities than in the past. It is significant that in a recent interview, Marcel Gelauff (NOS News editor) confessed that for him, with the presence of a 24/7 news provision, the speed with which a news fact can be brought is more important than the factual accuracy. “Imagine”, says Gelauff “that *De Telegraaf* opens this morning with the message that a Minister is in the possession of dirty money. It can take hours before the story is confirmed and in the meantime reactions of commentators and MPs are given everywhere. Then, *NOS*, cannot remain behind, but needs to go with the crowd”.

4.2 The role and influence of politics on media

To answer the question how the role of politics on media can be characterised, it is examined how the political agenda determines the media coverage. Furthermore, it is described how far political parties or politicians are trying to directly influence the media. Finally, it is examined how politicians themselves have become producers of news through social media. This is important for three reasons. In the first place, politicians will try to damage the reputation or the personal integrity of their opponents. Secondly, politicians will try to control and limit the media coverage if they are subject of one of these scandals. Lastly, political parties will try to frame these scandals so they will not be infected by the negative news of one of their politicians.

As McNair was cited in the previous part about the fact that the media make statements about politics in their own right, in the form of commentaries, editorials and interview questions, politicians can contribute to this as well. It happens often that politicians choose the journalists who may attend a press conference. It even happens that the journalists already have to hand in their questions before the conference starts, so the politician can give prepared answers. In addition, topics for these kinds of meetings with the press are often already determined in advance. This way, politicians can frame the topics and have a part in what way the discussion goes.

The study of Esser, Reinemann & Fan (2001) shows another form of effective communication: “for a long string of reasons, it has become increasingly difficult, and at the same time increasingly important for government leaders and vote-seeking politicians, to communicate effectively to the electorate through the mass media” (p.22). “This cannot be achieved anymore without professional assistance of skilled personnel who have assumed responsibility for proactive news management, campaign and message design, and research-based political marketing” (Esser, Reinemann & Fan, 2001, p.22). There are three arguments why political PR strategists or spin-doctors are of importance. Firstly, they know about the logic of the media. Secondly, they are able to anticipate, simulate, and stimulate the actions of journalists. Thirdly, they know how to control and dominate the news agenda. Politics and government are more than ever determined by spin doctors and communication strategists, whose job it is to manipulate a message in the media to their own ends: framing. “Framing refers to the way in which opinions about an issue can be altered by emphasizing or de-emphasizing particular facets of that issue” (Iyengar, 2005, p. 5). Spin-doctors give specially selected information to journalists in the interests of their customers and frame topics, using strategically chosen images and metaphors. Moreover, they control the public debate by submitting carefully timed opinion pieces to newspaper editors and think of one-liners that resonate and can steer a debate to a, not always factual, direction (Wijnberg, 2013, p. 29). Results from a study of Esser, Reinemann & Fan (2001) show that the American newspapers covered more than 1.341 spin-doctor activities and the British more than 874 in articles (p. 33). From these articles 24 % (United States) and 17 % (United Kingdom) were about explaining the candidate’s statements and actions.

Another example for politicians dominating the media is leaking information. According to Jones (2006) “leaking is just one of the many means by which information is traded with journalists and when we look at that relationship we have to come to terms with two very important factors. First the balance of power has shifted in favour of the information traders (the politicians). Increasingly it is the providers of information such as public relations consultants and political publicists who are gaining the upper hand and extending their stranglehold over journalism” (p.1). Politicians leak information on

purpose to time their message. For example, in the Netherlands this happens already several years in a row with pieces of the speech from the throne in the days towards Prince's day.

Furthermore, politicians produce their own news through social media, for example Facebook or Twitter. Nowadays, there is almost no politician anymore that is not involved in social media. In the previous part, the change in the role of the political parties and the individual politicians was already introduced shortly. This is an international appearance, as well as the increasing focus on people, which is usually associated with the influence of media (Te Velde, 2004, p. 100).

Manin analyses that the political party democracy give place to an, through the public dominated, 'audience democracy' (Manin, 1997). Nowadays, the public determines their choice through more specific issues than in the past. Also, the confidence they have in political leaders is less obvious. Politicians must now more and more recruit the voters, not to say seduce and delight them. They have to fight to receive and maintain the confidence of the voter. The politician as an individual is more central nowadays. According to Te Velde (2004) there are two reasons for this. The first reason is that voters are more inclined to let them guide by impressions and politicians of a specific moment. The second reason is that politicians nowadays are judged for their own actions, instead of the political ideas of their party. Politicians also make use of the character flaws of their opponents during campaigns. Politicians criticize the political opponent personally. Results from a study of Esser, Reinemann & Fan (2001) show that in the American newspapers, 79 % of the articles were about criticizing the political opponent e.g. negative campaigning. In the United Kingdom this percentage is 53 %. For the Netherlands, a good illustration was the debate between Diederik Samson, leader of the Labour Party and Mark Rutte, leader of the People's Party for Freedom and Democracy, in which Samson put aside Rutte. In the debate about the economy Rutte tried to explain why the social democrat answer to the economic crisis would not work out, Samsom said: "Now you are doing it again. Now you are doing it again". Samsom implied with these words that Rutte was lying about the facts. Here, Samson tries to let Rutte look bad to the public. He was questioning Rutte's integrity.

4.3 The interaction between politics and media in the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States

In the first two paragraphs of this chapter, the main characteristics of the relationships between politics and media were emphasized. In this paragraph the focus is on the three countries, and are some of the differences between these countries underlined. This is important, because it will explain why sex scandals play a different role in the media in the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States.

4.3.1 The Netherlands

In the second chapter of this dissertation, it is showed that the Netherlands is characterized as a multi-party democracy, in which the political party is most dominant. Moreover, some changes were signalled, like the growing importance of the individual politicians. Furthermore, in Chapter Three it was showed that newspapers still have an important role in the newsgathering of people. Moreover, commercial television channels do not have a long history in the Netherlands. Both media and politics in the Netherlands are accountable for the emphasis of the politicians themselves instead of the political differences between political parties.

First, the focus is on media. The emergence of the commercial networks in the Netherlands in 1989 changed the way politics was covered by the media in the Netherlands. There became more emphasis on the ratings, and that was something that was completely new in the Netherlands. “The media no longer exclusively covered the ‘boring’ political subjects, but focused more on the drama of politics and on its main political actors” (Geelen, 1998, pp. 144-145). News about politics had to become attractive. The growing focus on people in the Netherlands is not stronger than in other countries, such as in the United States or the United Kingdom, but because of its historic focus on political parties and subjects, the change was more striking in the Netherlands (Te Velde, 2004). Dutch journalists experience the pressure to report more on the personal lives of politicians. Zandbergen states, “journalists have to deal with this kind of news, although the majority of the political editorial board is against it” (K. Zandbergen, personal e-mail, 17 may 2013).

Second, the focus is on politics. During the last two decades it was very hard for political parties in the Netherlands to distinguish from each other. The main political parties agreed on a lot of political subjects, but to gain votes they had to find ways to distinguish themselves from other parties. They started to believe that the only way to gain these votes was to focus on attractive and charismatic political leaders (Geelen, 1998, p.145). A good example of this is the way media spoke of the socialist leader Wouter Bos during the elections of 2003, in which his nice bottom seemed to be the most

spoken topic. Research shows that in these decades the personalisation of politics in the Netherlands has grown. Only during the last two elections, i.e. 2010 and 2012, the political viewpoints have become more central again in the political debates, but this is mainly due to the effects of the economic crisis (Takens, 2013; Van Praag, 2007; Brants, 2005).

4.3.2 The United Kingdom

In the Chapter Two was showed that both individual politicians and political parties play a big role in the British political landscape. In Chapter Three, it was explained that on the one hand public broadcasting is very important in the television landscape, and on the other hand is tabloid journalism very important in the newspaper landscape. As a result of this, one can characterize the relationship in the United Kingdom more than in the Netherlands and the United States as dichotomised. On the one hand there is the quality press emphasising political issues and on the other hand there is the popular press emphasising the personal lives of politicians. The common drive of the British popular media is to expose and to embarrass. According to Lloyd (2004), “Journalism in Britain, and in Britain above all other democratic states, had been assailed by a series of assumptions and attitudes. The media have become increasingly destructive of their environment, increasingly prone to the ‘cynical assumption that politicians are born liars and rogues’“(p.10). Although, the quality press tries to emphasize the political issues instead of the exposure and embarrassment of the lives of politicians, ratings show that the audience likes hearing about the personal lives. This makes it quite hard for the quality press not to personalise their news coverage of politics (Lloyd, 2004; Bourdieu, 1998). Influencing the media by politicians has a long tradition in the United Kingdom, dating back to the seventeenth and eighteenth century. This is mainly due to the long history of newspapers in the United Kingdom. Thompson also names “the changing relation between the press and political parties and that it was common for newspapers and other periodicals to have an explicit political orientation” (Thompson, 2000, p. 51). In the last few decades, the strategy of influencing has professionalised, mainly by hiring professional campaign managers. Alastair Campbell is perhaps the most well-known campaign strategist in the last few campaigns. He was responsible for the electoral success of Tony Blair, by spinning his personal reputation in such a way the electorate was attracted to Blair (Jones, 1999).

4.3.3 The United States

In the second chapter, it was showed that individual politicians are very important in the American political system, mainly due to their electoral system. In Chapter Three, it is said that television is very important for the newsgathering of Americans and that commercial networks played an important role in the television landscape. These two characteristics are explanatory for the reason why the personal life of politicians always have been so important in the news coverage of politics in the United States.

The dominant role of television is best illustrated by the presidential campaign of 1960, in which President John F. Kennedy and President Richard Nixon were political opponents. A majority of the viewers of the debate pointed to President Kennedy as the winner, while the listeners of the radio pointed towards President Nixon. During the presidency of President Kennedy the emphasis on his personal life was big, especially his alleged affairs with several women (Kennedy, 2011). In the following campaigns the integrity of persons have become more and more important. This is also due to a number of personal scandals in which important political leaders played a role, for example the Watergate scandal during the seventies (Bernstein & Woodward, 1974). Journalists went looking for new scandals to become the next Woodward and Bernstein. As mentioned above, political campaigning has become professionalised. “Policies are advertised and citizens targeted; parties are branded and politicians hone their image” (Street, 2003, 86). Street (2003) states that “the political star is liked, much in the way that singers or actors are liked. They both deal in ‘authenticity’” (p. 94). The personal reputation is so important for a politician that it also has become the main strategy for political opponents to destroy that reputation. This tradition of negative campaigning goes back to the 1790s, in which President Thomas Jefferson hired a journalist to slander his political opponent (Mark, 2009).

5. The interaction between politics and media regarding sex scandals

Chapter Four focused on the interaction between politics and media in general. In this chapter the focus lies more on this interaction, particularly referring to political sex scandals. In the first part of this chapter, the main characteristics of a sex scandal are described and the four phases in which a sex scandal is exposed, are explained in line with the theory of John B. Thompson –. Subsequently, several sex scandals from the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States are discussed on the base of these four phases. Lastly, this chapter concludes with a comparison of the three countries in which the main differences and characteristics in relation to sex scandals are highlighted.

5.1 The characteristics of a sex scandal and the four phases in which a sex scandal is exposed

A political sex scandal involves the transgression of sexual codes. Thompson (2000) defines a sex scandal as follows: “sex scandals involve the public disclosure of activities of political figures which constitute, or which can be portrayed as constituting, a transgression of prevailing norms or codes governing the conducts of sexual relations” (p.120). Moreover, sexual-political scandals involve public revelations and allegations concerning the private life of politicians (Thompson, 2000, p. 120). Important to note is that sex scandals do not directly involve illegal activities. More often it is a matter of values, norms and morality. Sex scandals can occur in all kinds of forms, such as extramarital affairs, sex with a subordinate or minor, solicitation, prostitution, and with the development of social media, the distribution of sexually suggestive pictures.

All scandals occur over a period of time and, therefore, so do sex scandals. Thompson describes in his book *Political Scandal* the sequential structure of scandals, wherein he distinguishes four phases. In this dissertation, this theory is applied to describe and highlight the main characteristics of sex scandals discussed in this chapter. Nevertheless, the theory is adaptable to all kinds of scandals. This way, all sex scandals are processed the same way and it is clearer to see and understand the differences between the distinct scandals in the three countries. The phases that Thompson distinguishes are the pre-scandal phase, the phase of the scandal proper, the culmination and the aftermath. In this part the different phases are processed one by one.

An important characteristic of the pre-scandal phase defines Thompson (2000) as follows: “the pre-scandal phase may involve the publication of information which subsequently turns out to be relevant

to a scandal, although it may not be recognized as such and may not be picked up immediately by others” (pp. 73-74). Thompson also says that a scandal never starts directly with the revelation or disclosure, but may just involve investigations or inquiries (Thompson, 2000, p. 73). Moreover, this phase also includes rumour, gossip and hearsay among individuals, but they do not expose these rumours in a public manner.

The scandal proper is the second phase. Thompson (2000) writes that this phase “begins with the public disclosure of an action or event that sets in motion the process of claim and counter-claim which constitutes the scandal” (p.74). It is the phase of disclosure, exposure, denial, regret and lies. It is the real public breakthrough of the scandal, and it also becomes clear who eventually made the scandal public. These can be parties or persons involved, the media or someone who can benefit of it. It is also the phase in which the scandal gets spread out and picked up by others.

The third phase is the culmination. In this phase, the scandal is brought to a head. From here, the scandal can go in two directions. According to Thompson (2000) “on the one hand it may lead to an admission of guilt, a resignation, a sacking and/or criminal prosecution, but on the other hand it can also result in a collapse of the case against the individuals concerned and the dissipation of the scandal” (p.75). The culmination can lead to an impeachment trial, or just end into a period of relative calm and the public interest becomes less.

The aftermath is the fourth and last phase in which the time of drama and culmination is over. It is a phase in which all, whether or not concerned, parties engage in reflection of their own role of the scandal. Furthermore the aftermath may also be marked by the establishment of a commission of inquiry, which may be given the task to review the situation or set up a list of recommendations (Thompson, 2000, p. 76).

The next part of this chapter is divided into these four phases. Per phase, relevant sex scandals per country are discussed. It depends on the scandal what phase is clearly present, and not all scandals go through all four phases.

5.2 The pre-scandal phase

In the previous part is explained, that in this phase the first notes of rumour, gossip and hearsay are discussed among individuals, but not in a public manner. In this phase enquiries are made and journalists, the police or others conduct research, which may lead to the disclosure of a scandal. It is the period, prior to the big breakthrough and public disclosure of a sex scandal.

5.2.1 The Netherlands

The pre-scandal phase in the Netherlands can be divided into two rationalities. The most common one is that journalists and politicians have knowledge of affairs, but do not act on them. The rumours and gossip do not become public, because the disclosure can harm the personal contacts with the politicians in question. Zandbergen and Visser say that the informal contact between Dutch journalists and politicians is remarkable (K. Zandbergen, personal e-mail, 17 May 2013; J. Visser, personal e-mail, 12 May 2013). In addition, Zandbergen says that, even if it does not look like it, a journalist would not quickly harm a politician about what they do in their private lives. To illustrate this, she told “a few years ago it was common knowledge among journalists that a certain married politician, paid male adolescents for performing fellatio. The Dutch newspaper *De Telegraaf* had evidence but decided not to write about this. That was a striking choice” (K. Zandbergen, personal e-mail, 17 May 2013). The other rationality in the pre-scandal phase is the necessity to act on certain rumours, because the transgression of sexual conduct has gone to far. This had been the case with Jack de Vries and Rob Oudkerk. The first one had a sexual affair with a subordinate and the second one had alleged sexual escapades with heroin prostitutes.

Rob Oudkerk was a City Council Member for the PVDA (Labour Party) in Amsterdam. He was known as a popular politician, but with a loose attitude and he also had already expressed some clumsy statements. Prior to his sex scandal, the mayor and municipal Integrity Commission reprimanded him that he was not allowed to visit pornographic Web sites at work. As a result, there had been a bit of investigation and suspiciousness what is typical in a pre-scandal phase. Nevertheless, this was nothing compared to what happened on 10 January 2004, as described in the next phase.

5.2.2 The United Kingdom

Thompson (2000) writes “it is undoubtedly true that sex plays a major role in the scandals that pepper up the political history of Britain” (p.129). Sexual-political scandals in the United Kingdom are a tradition. Therefore, the press, and especially the popular press hunts for scoops about sexual escapades in the United Kingdom. Although, it must be said that as soon there is a suspicion about a sexual affair it is published. Therefore, the pre-scandal phase does not last long in the United Kingdom, but is always present, because after a scoop the popular press will focus on the next possible scandal.

The Ashdown affair is a good illustration of the influence that tabloids have in the United Kingdom. Paddy Ashdown was the leader of Britain’s Liberal Democratic Party from 1988 until 1999. In the year before he became leader of this party, he had an extramarital affair with his secretary, Tricia Howard. The affair did not last long and remained secret so it did not do any harm to his new function

as party leader. A few years later, Howard got divorced and, therefore, Ashdown contacted his solicitor, because he was afraid that his name could be mentioned. The notes of this conversation were put in the solicitor's safe. “In January 1992, just before the general election, *News of the World* began to pursue Howard, offering her large sums of money for her story of the affair” (Thompson, 2000, p. 142). Howard phoned Ashdown, who phoned his solicitor. The solicitor found out that his notes were stolen from the safe. He managed to secure an injunction, which would prevent the document from being published. After that it was not long before the story would break, but Ashdown took matters into his own hands, as will become clear in the phase of the culmination.

5.2.3 The United States

In the United States the pre-scandal phase is quite important, but mainly for other reasons than in the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. In the United States rumours and gossip about the sexual affairs play a large role in the bipartisan political landscape. The two main political parties use gossip and rumours for further investigation and use those during campaigns, which take place every two years for the House of Representatives. The pre-scandal phase is also used by the news media, like *Fox News*, to find new stories to gain higher ratings, like in the United Kingdom.

The most well known illustration for the pre-scandal phase is President Bill Clinton, although it must be mentioned that President Clinton is the perfect example for all four phases. Therefore, this scandal appears more often in this chapter than others. Besides having the title of President (1993-2001), President Clinton also had the reputation of being a womanizer. The pre-scandal phase for President Clinton is not mainly marked by newspapers, but by gossip and hearsay. This reputation of President Clinton did not help him in the other phases of the sex scandal. It was in the late 1970s, when he was Attorney General and later Governor of Arkansas, that he met Geniffer Flowers. They had a long-term affair and there were rumours that he had several other affairs besides the one with Flowers. Local newspapers reported it, but it remained gossip and did not go any further than that. However, the moment President Clinton declared his candidacy for presidency in October 1991, “the question of his extramarital affairs became a matter of intense interest in some quarters of the national press” (Thompson, 2000, p. 149). During the primary campaigns, President Clinton's strategy was neither to deny nor to admit the allegations. Towards the elections more revelations were revealed but, with Hillary at his side, President Clinton managed to keep his head above water and became elected as President in November 1992. The national press still did not pick up the story. Another key player from the time he was Governor of Arkansas was Paula Jones. “Paula Jones filed suit in 1994, alleging that President Bill Clinton propositioned her and exposed himself to her in a Little Rock hotel room three years earlier, when he was governor of Arkansas and she was a low-level state employee”

(Froomkin, 1998). In the meantime, while a law case against President Clinton was being built, the President met the 21-years-old White House-intern Monica Lewinsky in August 1995. In April 1996 Lewinsky was transferred to the Pentagon, and it was there she met Linda Tripp. Lewinsky told Tripp about the affair, what resulted in secretly recorded conversations by Tripp. In the meantime, Tripp had contact with the New York literary publicist Goldberg and the *Newsweek* reporter Isikoff, who was researching the Paula Jones case. They both wanted to publish her story and needed evidence. January 17, 1998 President Clinton gave his testimony in the Jones case and said also that he had seen Lewinsky just three times and never in private. At that time, President Clinton did not know that Lewinsky told everything to the FBI, but still, allegations about President Clinton’s affair with Lewinsky were not yet public knowledge.

5.3 The phase of the scandal proper

The phase of the scandal proper is the phase that begins with the public disclosure of an action or event that sets in motion the process of the scandal. It is the breakthrough of a scandal.

5.3.1 The Netherlands

Most of the sexual affairs in the Netherlands do not make it to the phase of the scandal proper, because the press seldom report on the private lives of politicians. This can on the one hand be explained by the media landscape in the Netherlands, which can be predominately characterized as quality press. On the other hand, it can be explained by the political landscape, in which the private lives of politicians is less important than political content, as described in the second chapter. Only when the transgression of sexual conducts has gone to far, the media is bound to report on it, as was the case with Jack de Vries and Rob Oudkerk. It depends mainly on the person having an affair with. If this is a minor, subordinate or heroin prostitute, the line is crossed.

Without any preliminary rumours, the Dutch gossip programme *RTL Boulevard* broke the story about the extramarital affair of State Secretary for Defence Jack de Vries. Van Der Horst told in *RTL Boulevard* that towards the elections that would take place only three weeks later, the individual politician becomes more important. De Vries’s mistress was his personal aide, Melissa Goede, with who he worked closely and went on business trips. “The popular press immediately leapt on the story, while the ‘serious’ newspapers held



back a day before giving in and following suit” (Tol, 2010). Jack de Vries was also spin-doctor for the Christian Democratic Appeal. This party is very strict in loyalty to family values. Therefore, this was extra harsh. What is remarkable in this case, is that it is hard to find any news coverage. The phase of the scandal proper was not very long in the case of Jack de Vries, because he admitted almost directly having a sexual relationship with his subordinate. After that – as can be seen in the next paragraph – the news worthiness diminished quite fast.

Contrary to the scandal of Jack de Vries that was disclosed through television, the Oudkerk affair was first published in a newspaper. Rob Oudkerk confessed to publicist Heleen van Royen, that he visited prostitutes at the Theemsweg in Amsterdam. The Dutch newspaper *Het Parool* published on 10 January 2004 Heleen van Royen’s column 'Integrity' in which she revealed what Oudkerk told her in confidence. The same day, *De Volkskrant* published the story about Oudkerk through which the sex scandal became newsworthy. Important to note, is that the story became that Oudkerk visited junkie prostitutes instead of regular prostitutes, and that became his downfall. That was also for the broad-minded Dutch people a step too far. On Monday 12 January all Dutch newspapers wrote about the scandal. Cohen, the mayor of Amsterdam, reprimanded Oudkerk again and all the newspapers were full of this. The difference between Oudkerk and De Vries was, according to Pels, that sleeping with your personal aid is ethically less drastic and a less mortal sin than visiting heroin prostitutes. Furthermore, Pels says that “De Vries’ reputation was less damaged, because he knew how to control the media” (D. Pels, personal interview, April 26, 2013). In addition, Valk says that “extramarital affairs never were really relevant in the Netherlands”. He names Job Cohen and Ad Melkert. They had an extramarital affaire, but almost nobody knows about them. Valk says that this is “mainly due to the puritan culture of the United States, while in the Netherlands it is more about to live and let live” (G. Valk, personal e-mail, 16 May 2013).

5.3.2 The United Kingdom

The Dutch national media are relatively restrained with the publication about the sexual affairs of politicians. This is quite different in the United Kingdom. This is largely due to the existence of the popular press. The tabloids regularly publicize on the private lives of politicians, especially when it concerns a sexual affair. After all, sex sells. Another important factor is the electoral system in the United Kingdom, in which each politician is accountable for his actions, whether public or private, in his constituency.

According to Visser, “the United Kingdom has fewer scruples than the Netherlands when it comes to researching and reporting about extramarital affairs” (Visser, personal e-mail, May 12, 2013). A good

example of the explicit role of the tabloids in the United Kingdom was when the tabloid *People* broke the story about the extramarital affair of David Mellor with actress Antonia de Sancha on 19 July 1992. According to Tweede and Rowley (2013), De Sancha did not tell the story, but was it a friend of her that leaked about the affair to *People*. It is important to stress that a tabloid, which is part of the popular press, started to write about the scandal of Mellor, and not the quality press. At that time David Mellor was Secretary of State at the Department of National heritage and was responsible for media and freedom of the press. Prior to the breakthrough of his scandal he wanted to limit this freedom. After the first article of *People* about his affair with De Sancha, other newspapers quickly picked up on the story. All tabloids were digging into the story and came with details about their affair. Journalists even bugged both the houses of Mellor and De Sancha. It was not really important whether these stories were true or not. For example, *The Sun* reported on Mellor’s desire to have sex in his Chelsea’s outfit, but afterwards this fact appeared to be made up.



On 26 December 1993 *The News of the World* ran the story that Tim Yeo, Minister of the Environment, had an extramarital affair with Julia Stent, a single mother and Tory councillor from his constituency South Suffolk. When *The News of the World* disclosed this sexual affair, their ‘love child’ was already six months old. Thompson states that “his position was made particularly difficult by the fact that his mistress was a single mother, at a time when some senior figures in the Conservative Party were advocating a tough line on single mothers who drew state benefits.” (p.127) After the publication Yeo left for a holiday to the Seychelles, but had to return early because of the blaze of publicity. On his return, a picture was taken from Yeo crouching in the back of a car. The next day the headline of *The Daily Mirror* was (Williams, 1998):

“IF YOU DO NOT LOOK, IT MIGHT ALL GO AWAY”

5.3.3 The United States

The motivations for disclosure of the scandals in the United States are different from the Netherlands. In the United States an extramarital affair is already enough, while in the latter the transgression of the sexual conduct lies further, as argued above. Furthermore, the competition between the different news channels in the United States is so big; they keep digging in a story until the politician has admitted

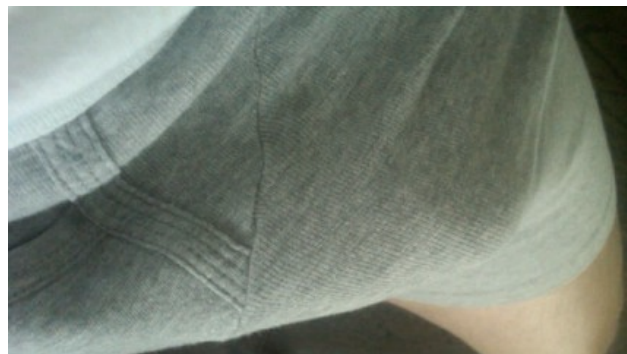
the truth. Another factor for the importance of this phase is the political culture, in which political opponents keep asking questions about the, whether or not alleged, sexual affair.

As written in the previous phase, President Clinton was surrounded by the reputation of being a womanizer, but until mid-January 1998 he did not face serious problems. This changed when Matt Drudge, a self-appointed cyber journalist, decided to publish parts of the Clinton-Lewinsky story with his online political gossip sheet, the *Drudge Report* (Owen, 2000, p.165). The big breakdown for Clinton came after this online breakthrough on Wednesday 21 January. On that day, the *Washington Post* broke the story in the national press, under the headline:

“Clinton Accused of Urging Aide to Lie”

It is explainable, that the headline was about the lies President Clinton told and not about what he did. According to Pels, “it is the primness of the Americans that in their opinion lying is worse than the action itself. They found it worse that President Clinton was whining about definitions than what he actually did” (D. Pels, personal telephone conversation, April 26, 2013). On the same day as the *Washington Post*’s article, President Clinton appeared at national television, denying any of it. The denial reached its peak on 26 January 1998 when he said the famous words “I did not have sexual relations with that woman, Miss Lewinsky. I never told anybody to lie, not a single time. Never. These allegations are false” (Clinton, 1998). From then on, America and the rest of the world were under the spell of this sex scandal and it did not go away for a long time. All newspaper and television stations were headlining the story and it dominated the news for more than a year. As Owen (2000) wrote “the Clinton-Lewinsky matter unfolded in an era in which ‘new media’ actors, such as talk show hosts, tabloid reporters and Internet gossip columnists had entered the political communications scene, altering the rules by which leaders, citizens and mainstream journalists negotiated the public sphere” (p. 161).

The development of social media is explained in Chapter Three. Through social media, messages come into the world very fast and without any preliminary announcements. The effect of the development of social media is that the pre-scandal phase is not present. It can of course lead to a period of rumour but is a thing by itself. Democratic U.S. Congressman Anthony Weiner was the first to be involved in “the first big social media political sex scandal” (Bradley, 2011). On 27 May 2011, Weiner’s



story disclosed when he used the social media Web site Twitter to send a sexually suggestive picture of his erect penis concealed by boxer briefs to a 21-year-old woman. The tweet was removed very fast from his account, but by then it was already too late. A user identified as "Dan Wolfe" on Twitter had the photo on screenshot and sent it to the conservative blogger Andrew Breitbart who published the picture on his *Big Journalism* website the following day. In the beginning of June, Weiner gave a series of interviews in which he denied sending the photo and suggested that someone, perhaps a political opponent, had hacked into his accounts and published the photo. Unfortunately, after the revelation of the photo, other allegations occurred about Weiner.

5.4 The culmination

This phase is the period in which a scandal comes to a head. In this phase, the denial is over and the conceding begins. If any sanctions are taken, this is the phase in which that happens.

5.4.1 The Netherlands

The third phase in the Netherlands is rather short, as the two scandals will show. The most important element is the confession of the politician in question, after that the scandal in the media diminishes. “The fact that Oudkerk visited prostitutes was enough information for most Dutch people. Journalists in the Netherlands do not go into all the details, not even about Jack de Vries’s mistress. In England this is quite different” (Visser, personal e-mail, May 12, 2013). Sanctions for a sexual affair in which the sexual conducts were transgressed, concerns mainly the resignation of the politician. This is in line with the questionnaire, in which people were asked what they thought of politicians who had an extramarital affair. 61 % of the respondents answered that this was their own responsibility. This is also different from the United States, where the accountability of the sexual escapades plays a larger role.

As quick as the media hype around the scandal of Jack de Vries appeared, so it disappeared. He resigned as Secretary of State on 14 May 2010, four days after the breakthrough of his scandal and also retired from his political activities. He said in a press release that he decided to resign, also because the public pressure was too high. He was thrown out of his house by his wife and did not have a job anymore. After that, the scandal diminished. The scandal did not harm the career of De Vries in the long term. Nowadays, he is Strategy Director at *Hill and Knowlton Netherlands* and is responsible for Public Affairs. He owns his own company in communication advise. This can be explained by his experience as spin-doctor. As said in Chapter Four, there are several reasons why spin-doctors are of importance. Firstly, they know about the logic of the media. Secondly, they are able to anticipate,

simulate, and stimulate the actions of journalists. Thirdly, they know how to control and dominate the news agenda.

After the disclosure of De Vries’s sexual activities, the scandal appeared to diminish quite soon. Oudkerk was, however, less fortunate. On Saturday 17 January 2004 news was made publicly of Oudkerk visiting junkie prostitutes. On Monday 19 January 2004, all national newspapers opened with this story about Oudkerk. That day, Oudkerk was forced to resign after a party meeting of the Labour Party. The next day, on 20 January, the resignation of Oudkerk became headline news. According to Leensen (2004) “that day thirty-five articles appeared in the six mayor newspapers. Also on television the resignation of Oudkerk received mass attention. News programmes such as *Nova*, *Netwerk Twee Vandaag* and *Goedemorgen Nederland* had an item about Oudkerk” (p.54). Halbertsma (2004), the chairman of the *PVDA* said (as cited in Leensen) that Oudkerk was the victim of a smear campaign of the media. Subsequently, also Oudkerk blamed the media and said that he wanted to sue them (Oudkerk, 2005). The news about the sexual escapades and the resignation remained news in the following week, but after that almost none of the newspaper reported on it anymore.

5.4.2 The United Kingdom

The phase of the culmination in the United Kingdom seems to be of less duration than the phase of the scandal proper. This is mainly because, as of the moment politicians admit they had a sexual affair, there is not really anything juicy to report upon. The consequences for the politicians in question are also smaller, or at least it seems that way, than in the other two countries.

Ashdown decided to control his own destiny. An explanation of this could be that Ashdown was, more or less, forced to come forward with their stories, because the press was threatening to publish about his sexual affair. In the meantime of the injunction, Ashdown knew that it was only a matter of time before the story would break through. When Ashdown heard that the *Scotsman*, which was not covered by the English injunction, was going to run the story, he held a hastily convened press conference at Westminster on 6 February 1992 in which he openly admitted the affair. In this case Ashdown came forward with his story, before the press could. Here it is obvious that if the popular press would not have this large impact, Ashdown would not have felt the pressure to come forward with his story before the popular press would. It is also contrary to the Oudkerk affair



where the quality press broke the story after they had enough evidence. After Ashdown brought the scandal forward, it resulted in an event that was widely reported in the press. He also did a photo shoot with his wife next to him in front of his house. Nevertheless, because he brought the story himself and gave photographers the chance to make pictures, he prevented an escalation. Ashdown gave the media what they wanted and that could be the reason why everything went back to normal quite quickly. In this case, the phase of culmination is not even very strong and there is no aftermath to speak of.

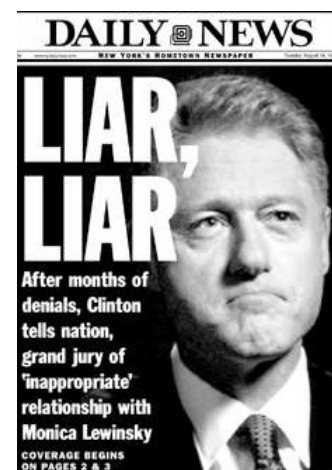
The media enlarged the story about Mellor’s affair during the summer. “Mellor eventually resigned by late September after tabloid allegations that he had accepted air tickets and the use of a villa from Monica Bauwens, the daughter of a leading official in the Palestine Liberation organisation” (Dewan & Myatt, 2007, p.63). Furthermore, Thompson states (2000) “the accumulation of embarrassing revelation and allegations about Mellor’s sex life was also the centre of the scandal that led to his downfall” (p. 128). The newspapers were cruel to him and the tabloids kept continuing their stories about Mellor, and as a result he could not handle it anymore.

The headlines about the affair of Tim Yeo lasted two weeks, after which he was forced to resign as Minister of the Environment. Noteworthy is, that the pressure of his resignation came from his own constituency. This is exemplary for the important role of the electoral system in this country, because this would not have been possible in the Netherlands. Although Tim Yeo had to resign as minister from the Cabinet, he stayed as MP in Parliament (Williams, 1998). During the next election he gained confidence once again from the voters in his district.

5.4.3 The United States

The phase of the culmination is important in the United States, because in that phase the politician in question is held responsible. The sexual relation is important, but it is more important what the consequences of this affair will be. The question is how a politician handles the situation. For example, American people find it more important that politicians do not lie, instead of the sexual affair itself (D. Pels, personal telephone conversation, April 26, 2013).

The evidence against President Clinton grew and the press was on top of everything. Eventually the President accepted that his strategy of denial no longer worked. He testified on 17 August 1998 to the Grand Jury admitting his affair and in a televised address later that day, he publicly acknowledged for the first time that he had had a relationship with Lewinsky that was not appropriate. The full report about



President Clinton’s sex scandal was proposed to the Congress in September 1998, and on 19 December the House voted to impeach the President. According to Owen (2000) “new media channels, in particular, helped framing the events leading up to the presidential impeachment in terms of dramatic, prime time-style entertainment” (p. 165).



After several days of denying that he had posted the image, Weiner admitted to have sent the particular photo but also other sexually explicit photos and messages to women both before and during his marriage. In the case of Weiner, just as in President Clinton’s case, it was almost more important that Weiner tried to lie about it, especially because it was so obvious that the picture was posted by himself on Twitter by accident. On June 16, 2011 Weiner announced he would resign his seat in Congress.

5.5 The aftermath

The fourth and last phase is the aftermath. In this phase, the main actors reflect on their role during the scandal. Thompson writes: “much of this commentary takes place in the media itself”(p.76).

5.5.1 The Netherlands

Due to the rather small media exposure of the sexual scandals in the Netherlands, there is also less to say about the last phase. Only after the Oudkerk affair there was discussion about the role of the media. For example, columnist Heleen van Royen was blamed. Oudkerk had told her private things in a private conversation and he never agreed with the publication of that conversation. Therefore, the question was, whether she should have published the column or not. In the opinion of Chavannes, it depends on the relation between Van Royen and Oudkerk on the moment Oudkerk confessed his revelations. “If they were friends, it is infringement of trust. Nevertheless, when they only knew each other in terms of business, it is still quite mercilessly to publish everything. Especially when she was listening to it as a journalist” (M. Chavannes, personal e-mail, April 25, 2013). Later that year *Publistat Mediaonderzoek* conducted a media research on the Oudkerk affair. It concluded that the media became self-referential, which meant they copied each other’s news and were lead by each other’s stories (Leensen, 2004). Oudkerk himself wrote he hoped that the media conducted more reflection on themselves (Oudkerk, 2005).

5.5.2 The United Kingdom

There is a lot of discussion in the United Kingdom about the role of the tabloids in society (Scheller, 2000). This is the same when it comes to the disclosure of sex scandals in the popular press.

Nevertheless, there were only a few reflections on the role of the media or politics regarding the examined scandals. In the case of Mellor, only years later Antonia de Sancha admitted that “the tittle-tattle over what Mr Mellor wore, or did, in the bedroom was a fantasy concocted not by her, but by the celebrity publicist Max Clifford so that he could peddle her story for the highest price.” (Interview with Antonia de Sancha, Daily Mail, 1 February 2013).

5.5.3 The United States

The Clinton-Lewinsky affair was reflected a lot in the aftermath. “In the eyes of many ordinary Americans, the Clinton-Lewinsky scandal was an event that had been blown out of proportion by a combination of partisan interest and a media hype”, according to Thompson (2000, p. 157). Thompson (2000) also states that it was “a media scandal, driven on by a dogged investigative team and a multitude of media organisations which were tripping over themselves to publish the latest revelations” (p. 157). Nevertheless, there were opinions that it was all not serious enough to warrant impeachment. In addition, news media outlets seemed to become victims of competition, which regrettably forced them to lower their standards in order to satisfy the needs of the audience by searching for the truth (Sabato, Stencel & White, 2000). The Clinton-Lewinsky scandal became a truly global event, receiving extensive coverage by the press and television throughout the world and generated much discussion and bemused amazement among individuals in widely dispersed locations.

As for Weiner, his scandal foremost meant the dawn of a new era, in which social media itself became a factor of importance. Marturano (2011) states that “Twitter facilitated Weiner’s affairs, which decades back would have demanded a different process, longer times, and reflections”. Furthermore he states “Weiner’s use of Twitter intertwined his personal (private) and professional life” (Marturano, 2011). It is hard to say at this point what role social media exactly will have, because it is fully in development. What could be said for certain is that with social media, news about sex scandals will have a new dynamic, in which news will spread faster and further. Also the behaviour of the politician himself will be more in the middle of the attention. Last but not least, opinions about this behaviour will become more harsh and brutal.

5.6 Comparison between the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States

In this chapter a number of political sex scandals in the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and The United States were examined. The way these scandals were treated in media and politics, illustrates the relationship between them in the three countries. The exposure of these scandals is studied in four different phases, in line with the theory of Thompson. Although the research was not extensive in all the examined countries, there are some general, preliminary remarks to make about the relationship between politics and media in the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States.

What is most striking in the case studies is the (alleged) focus of the media in the three countries on different phases. It seems that in the Netherlands only the phase of the culmination is important. The cases of De Vries and Oudkerk showed that the newspapers and television programmes were interested from the moment the news of the scandal was confirmed and their interest diminished as soon as the two politicians were open about their affairs. This is also due to the political culture in the Netherlands, in which the politician himself is less important.

This is quite different to the situation in the United Kingdom, where the focus of the media lies mainly on the scandal proper. This might be explained by the important role the popular press has in the United Kingdom, as well by the celebrity culture, which has been mentioned by Pels. This phase is quite extensive in the United Kingdom as the case studies showed. The political system is also responsible for the way politicians come forward with news about their scandals; they after all are accountable in their constituency for their (personal) actions and it is better to come forward themselves, because that makes them more trustworthy.

On the basis of the case studies it is harder to make a statement about the main focus of the media in the United States. It seems that in the United States, as in the United Kingdom, the trustworthiness of the individual politicians is the most important factor. This might be due to their similarities in their political system, but there are some important differences. The popular press, for example, is not as important in the United States. It seems that in the media, but also in the political domain, the main focus lies on the phase of the culmination. Therefore, it is discussed in what way the politicians can be accountable for their actions. This differs, however, from the Netherlands, because the main question in the United States is, ‘what are the consequence for the politician in question?’

Another important difference between the three countries is the news worthiness of sexual affairs of politicians. In the Netherlands, most sexual affairs are never made public. This is because of the informal contacts between politicians and journalists, but also because the boundaries of sexual

conducts are broader than in the United Kingdom or the United States. Cheating itself is not news worthy in the Netherlands. This is different in the United Kingdom and the United States, where sexual affairs are disclosed more easily. Moreover, in the United Kingdom the tabloidisation is responsible for the publication of all kind of details about the sexual affair.

6. Conclusion

*“Because you broke the only rule in politics. You want to be President, you can start a war, you can lie, you can cheat, you can bankrupt the country, but you cannot f*** the interns... they will get you for that”*

In the movie *The Ides of March*, Stephen Meyers, who is played by Ryan Gosling, discovers the secret affair of Governor Morris, who is played by George Clooney, with an intern. The intern gets pregnant, but she is persuaded to get an abortion. Meyers tries to blackmail the governor, because he knows that public knowledge of the affair will ruin the Governor’s chances of presidency. First, the Governor Morris does not believe the evidence, but the consequences of the divulgence would be too far reaching. In the end of the movie both get what they want: Meyers gets his job as campaign manager, while Governor Morris can run for President without being damaged by a possible sex scandal. The movie ends with questions from the speech of Governor Morris about the importance of integrity and dignity, showing the precarious relationship between politics and media.

In this dissertation, the interaction between politics and media regarding sex scandals in the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States, was examined. The main premise was that the way sex scandals are treated in each of the countries is an illustration of the relationship of politics and media in that country. To support this, this dissertation was divided into four parts. In the second chapter the focus was on the characteristics of and main developments in the political landscape in each of the countries. An important observation was that in each of the countries there is a growing emphasis on the personal lives of politicians instead of political content, but the personalisation of politics has not evolved to the same point in each of the countries. The third chapter described the characteristics of and main developments in the media landscape in each of the countries. An important finding was that media logic is a driving mechanism on reporting about politics and politicians. This means that journalists are mostly concerned about ratings when choosing a news subject, rather than examining what event or subject might be newsworthy. The result of this is that news has a growing emphasis on the politicians themselves. In the fourth chapter the focus lied more specifically on the relationship between politics and media in each of the countries. An important conclusion was that media and politics need and use each other; they both gain from each other’s presence and they both have instruments with which they try to influence each other. The fifth chapter centred on the interaction between politics and media regarding sex scandals. While using different phases through which scandals are exposed, a number of sex scandals in each of the countries was examined. With this approach, it is explained why in each of the countries a different phase gets more attention from

politics and the media. This can be caused by the specific development of the political and media landscape in each country, because the focus on one phase or the other is an illustration of the interaction between politics and media in that country.

It seems that in the Netherlands only the phase of the culmination is important. The cases of De Vries and Oudkerk showed that the newspapers and television programmes were interested from the moment the news of the scandal was confirmed and their interest diminished as soon as the two politicians were open about their affairs. The reports were mainly focused on the actual events, the facts. This is mainly due to the existence of quality press in the Netherlands, when compared to the United Kingdom and the United States. It can also be explained by the informal contacts between politicians and journalists in the Netherlands, which are a lot closer than in the other two countries. Another important factor is the political culture in the Netherlands, in which the individual politician is less important. In the Netherlands the personalisation of politics is relatively small, when compared to the United Kingdom and the United States. This can be explained by the differences in the electoral systems. Although there are some developments that show that politicians – and their personal lives – are becoming more important in media coverage. This is quite different to the situation in the United Kingdom.

In the United Kingdom the media seems mainly focused on the phase of the scandal proper. This might be explained by the important role the popular press has in the United Kingdom, as well as the celebrity culture. The emphasis on the gossip and rumours surrounding the personal lives of politicians is a result of the existing, rigid class system in the United Kingdom. It is hard for people to climb up from one social class to another. Therefore, people like to read about the successes and about the failures and downfall of public figures. The coverage of the phase of the scandal proper is quite extensive in the United Kingdom as the case studies showed. This is not surprising, because gossip sells and the ratings have become more important. As a result of the gossip and rumours, the politicians in question were almost forced to come forward with the news of their scandal in the second phase. A second important factor in the United Kingdom, which explains the emphasis on the personal lives of politicians, is the political landscape. In the United Kingdom the individual politician wants to be visible for the people in the constituency, because of the electoral system. This electoral system is also responsible for the way politicians come forward with news about their scandals; they are accountable in (personal) actions in their constituency after all and you are better off coming forward yourself, because that makes you more trustworthy to the voters. Due to this element the phase of the scandal of the culmination gets less attention in the United Kingdom.

Based on the case study it is harder to make a statement about the main focus of the media in the

United States. It seems that in the United States, like in the United Kingdom, the trustworthiness of the individual politicians is also the most important factor. This might be due to the similarities in their political system, but there are some important differences. For example, the popular press is not as important in the United States. This could be explained by the greater belief in the possibility of social mobility in the United States, the American Dream. This belief is cultivated by stories about self-made people in infotainment programmes. The focus in these programmes lies more on the rise of these people than on their fall. It seems that in the media, but also in the political domain, the main focus is on the phase of the culmination, so the question in what way the politician can be held accountable for his or her actions and what consequences there will be for the politician in question.

It is not likely that the emphasis on and importance of sex scandals in the interaction between politics and media will diminish in the coming years. Sex scandals will probably grow in importance, because the media and rationality of ratings will look for new scandals: sex sells. There is also a chance that the interaction between politics and media regarding sex scandals in the three countries will become more similar. The growing internationalisation will play an important role, as will the growing emphasis on the personal lives of politicians in all of the three countries. In the next few years the new factor, the dawn of social media, will also play a key role in the way sex scandals are exposed. Social media can change the way politics and media interact with each other, like one of the cases showed, but the broader implications are still unclear. All these factors ultimately contribute to Stephen Meyers' advice for politicians in *The Ides of March*: “*but you cannot f*** the interns...they will get you for that*”

7. References

- Bernstein, C & Woodward, B. (1974). *All the president's men*. New York: Simon and Schuster
- Bourdieu, P. (1998). *On television*. New York: The New Press
- Bradley, W. (2011). *Weinergate's Lasting Impact: The First Big Social Media Political Sex Scandal*. Retrieved April 27, 2013, from the Huffington Post Web site:
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/william-bradley/weinergates-lasting-impac_b_872585.html
- Brants, K. (2005). Informatief, hard en toch leuk. In Brants, K. & Van Praag, P. (Eds), *De verkiezingscampagnes van het lange jaar 2002*. (pp. 152-172). Amsterdam: Het Spinhuis
- Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek (2009). *Minder krantenabbonnementen*. Retrieved April 8, 2013 from the Statline Web site:
(<http://statline.cbs.nl/StatWeb/publication/?DM=SLNL&PA=70655ned&D1=>)
- Corner, J. & Pels, D. (Eds.). (2003). *Media and the Restyling of Politics*. London: SAGE Publications
- Dahl, R.A. (2000). *On democracy*. New Haven and London: Yale university press.
- Darlington, R. (2013). *A short guide to the British political system*. Retrieved 30 March, 2013 from the Roger Darlington Web site: <http://www.rogerdarlington.me.uk/Britishpoliticalsystem.html#-Arms>
- Dewan, T. & Myatt, P. (2007). Scandal, Protection, and Recovery in the Cabinet. *The American Political Science Review*, 101, 63-77
- Esser, F., Reinemann, C. & Fan, D. (2001). *Spin Doctors in the United States, Great Britain and Germany: Metacommunication about Media Manipulation*. Retrieved April 19, 2013, from the Sage Publications Web site: <http://www.sagepublications.com/>
- Froomkin, D. (1998). *Jones v. Clinton*. Retrieved April 28, 2013, from the Washington Post Web site:
<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/politics/special/pjones/pjones.htm>
- Geelen, J-P. (1998). *Het Haagse huwelijk: hoe pers en politiek tot elkaar veroordeeld zijn*. Nijmegen: SUN
- Government (n.d.). Retrieved March 30, 2013, from the Wikipedia Web Site:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Kingdom#Politics

- Guskin Emily, Jukowitz Mark, Mitchell Amy (2012). *Network News: A Year of Change and Challenge at NBC*. Retrieved April 6, 2013 from the State of the Media Web site:
<http://stateofthemediasite.org/2013/network-news-a-year-of-change-and-challenge-at-nbc/>
- Heywood, A. (2002). *Politics*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan
- Instituut voor Publiek en Politiek & Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (2008). *The Dutch Political System in a Nutshell*. Amsterdam: Instituut voor Publiek en Politiek.
- Iyengar, S. (2005). *Speaking of Values: The Framing of American Politics*. Retrieved April 18, 2013, from the Stanford Web site:
<http://pcl.stanford.edu/common/docs/research/iyengar/2005/speaking.pdf>
- Jones, N. (2000). *Sultans of Spin: the media and the new labour government*. London: Orion Books
- Jones, N. (2006). *Leaks, Lies and Tip Offs*. Retrieved April 19, 2013, from the Media Wise Web site:
<http://www.mediawise.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/Leaks-Lies-Tip-Offs-Nick-Jones.pdf>
- Kassim, S. (2012). *Twitter Revolution: How the Arab spring was helped by social media*. Retrieved May 16, 2013, from the Policymic Web site:
<http://www.policymic.com/articles/10642/twitter-revolution-how-the-arab-spring-was-helped-by-social-media>
- Kennedy, J. (2011). *Historic Conversations on Life with John F. Kennedy*. New York: Hyperion
- Lange, de, Paul. (n.d.). *Aan de schandpaal*. Retrieved February 24, 2013, from the Paul de Lange Web site: <http://www.pauldelange.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/Aan-de-schandpaal.pdf>
- Leensen, J. (2004). *Anatomie van schandalen: de rol van de media in politieke-affaires in Nederland*. Retrieved April 29, 2013, from the Publistat Web site:
<http://www.publistat.nl/site/nieuws/pdf/een-anatomie-van-schandalen.pdf>
- Lloyd, J. (2004). *What the Media Are Doing to Our Politics*. London: Constable
- Manin, B. (1997). *The principles of representative government*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Mark, D. (2009). *Going Dirty: the art of negative campaigning*. Plymouth: Roman & Littlefield Publishers

- Marturano, A (Ed.). (2011). *Ethics of Online Social Networks*. Retrieved April 28, 2013, from the IERIE Web site: <http://www.i-r-i-e.net/inhalt/016/marturano.pdf>
- McAllister, I. (2005). The personalization of politics. In Dalton, R.J. & Klingemann, H.D. (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of political behaviour*. (pp. 571-588). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- McNair, B. (2007). *An Introduction to Political Communication*. London: Routledge
- Mitchell, A., Rosenstiel, T. & Christian, L. (2012). *What Facebook and Twitter Mean for News*. Retrieved May 16, 2013, from the State of the Media Web site: <http://stateofthemediasite.org/2012/mobile-devices-and-news-consumption-some-good-signs-for-journalism/what-facebook-and-twitter-mean-for-news/>
- Motivaction (2013). *Hoe beleven burgers de iSamenleving. Een onderzoek naar kennis, bewustzijn en gedrag ten aanzien van de iSamenleving*. Retrieved April 9, 2013 from the Rijksoverheid Web site: <http://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten-en-publicaties/rapporten/2013/04/04/hoe-beleven-burgers-de-isamenleving.html>
- Multiscope (2012). *Facebook gebruik verzevenvoudigd in 2 jaar*. Retrieved April 6, 2013 from the Multiscope Web site: <http://www.multiscope.nl/organisatie/nieuws/berichten/facebook-gebruik-verzevenvoudigd-in-2-jaar.html>
- Ofcom (2013). *Public Service Broadcasting Annual Report 2012*. Retrieved April 5, 2013 from the Ofcom Web site: <http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/broadcast/reviews-investigations/psb-review/psb2012/section-a.pdf>
- Oudkerk, R. (2005). *Geen weg terug*. Amsterdam: Prometheus.
- Owen, D. (2000). Popular Politics and the Clinton/Lewinsky Affair: The Implications for Leadership. *Political Psychology*, 21, 161-177
- Parliamentary Business (n.d.) Retrieved March 30, 2013, from the United Kingdom Parliament Web site: <http://www.parliament.uk/>
- Pew Research Center (2012). *In Changing News Landscape, Even Television is Vulnerable*. Retrieved April 7, 2013 from the People Press Web site: <http://www.people-press.org/2012/09/27/in-changing-news-landscape-even-television-is-vulnerable/>
- Political parties. (n.d.). Retrieved from the United Kingdom Parliament Web site: <http://www.parliament.uk/about/mps-and-lords/members/mps/>

- Politics, Elections and Integrity. (2012). Retrieved April 20, 2013, from the Mzalendo Web site: <http://www.mzalendo.com/blog/2012/04/23/politics-elections-and-integrity/>
- Praag, van, P. (2007). De verkiezingscampagne: professioneler en feller. In Aarts, K., Van der Kolk, H. & Rosema, M., *Een verdeeld electoraat. De Tweede Kamerverkiezingen van 2006*. Utrecht: Uitgeverij Het Spectrum
- Rijksoverheid. (2010). *De Vries treedt af als staatssecretaris*. Retrieved April 27, 2013, from the Rijksoverheid Web site: <http://www.rijksoverheid.nl/nieuws/2010/05/14/de-vries-treedt-af-als-staatssecretaris.html>
- Rose, C (2013). *UK Social Media Statistics for 2013*. Retrieved April 9, 2013 from the Rose McGrory Web site: <http://www.rosemcgrory.co.uk/2013/01/08/uk-social-media-statistics-for-2013/>
- Sabato, J., Stencel, M. & Lichter, S. (2000). *Peepshow: Media and Politics in an Age of Scandal*. Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.
- Scheiding der Machten. (2012). Retrieved March 30, 2013 from the Prison Law Web site: <http://www.prisonlaw.nl/en/landen/noord-amerika/verenigde-staten?start=1>
- Sedon, C (2011). Office for National Statistics: *Lifestyles and social participation*. Retrieved April 10, 2013 from the Office for National Statistics Web site: <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/.../social-trends.../social-trends/social-trends-41/lifes>
- Social Networks and UGC (2013). Retrieved April 9, 2013 from the New Media Trend Watch Web site: <http://www.newmediatrendwatch.com/markets-by-country/18-uk/152-social-networks-and-ugc>
- Stichting KijkOnderzoek, Intomart GfK, The Nielsen Company. (2013). *Jaarrapport 2012*. Retrieved April 5, 2013 from the SKO Web site: http://www.kijkonderzoek.nl/images/stories/Publicaties/130118_SKO_Jaarrapport_2012.pdf
- Takens, J. (2013). *Media logic and electoral democracy*. 's-Hertogenbosch: Uitgeverij BOXPress
- Thompson, J. (2000). *Political Scandal: Power and Visibility in the Media Age*. Cambridge: Polity Press
- Tol, van, M. (2010). *Sex scandal costs deputy defence minister his job*. Retrieved April 29, 2013, from the RNW Web site: <http://www.rnw.nl/english/article/sex-scandal-costs-deputy-defence-minister-his-job>

- Tweedie, N. & Rowley, T. (2013) *Whatever happened to Antonia de Sancha - the kiss-and-tell lover who brought down David Mellor?* Retrieved April 28, 2013, from the Telegraph Web site: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/celebritynews/9840024/Whatever-happened-to-Antonia-de-Sancha-the-kiss-and-tell-lover-who-brought-down-David-Mellor.html>
- Velde, te, H. (2004). Personalisering van de politiek. In Steur, B., Dijk, van, H. & Nieuwenhuizen, van den, G. (Eds.), *Democratische vergezichten: essays over de representatieve democratie in Nederland*. (pp. 95-115). Den Haag: Raad voor het openbaar bestuur
- Vlugt, van, Wieneke (2012). *Yes we can – the use of social media by Dutch politicians during electoral campaigns in 2012*. Retrieved April 7, 2013 from the Masters of Media Web site: <http://mastersofmedia.hum.uva.nl/2012/09/10/yes-we-can-the-use-of-social-media-by-dutch-politicians-during-electoral-campaigns/>
- West, D.M. & Orman, J. (2003). *Celebrity Politics: Real Politics in America*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall
- Wijnberg, R. (2013). *De Nieuwsfabriek: hoe media ons wereldbeeld vervormen*. Amsterdam: De Bezige Bij.
- Williams, A. (1998). *UK Government & Politics. Second edition*. Oxford: Heinemann Educational Publishers

Appendix I Personal telephone conversation

Dick Pels

Director of the scientific bureau of the Green Left Party

26 April 2013

Lisa: Hallo, fijn dat u de moeite wilt nemen om op deze korte termijn een paar vragen te willen beantwoorden. Zal ik eerst iets vertellen over de context van mijn scriptie?

D. Pels: Ja, dat is goed.

Lisa: Het is een HBO afstudeerscriptie voor mijn studie European Studies aan de Haagse Hogeschool die gaat over de relatie tussen politiek en media en dan met name bij seksschandalen. Ik onderzoek daarbij ook de verschillen tussen Nederland, Engeland en de Verenigde Staten. Ik kijk dus naar de rol van politiek en media bij politieke seksschandalen en doe dat aan de hand van verschillende casussen.

D. Pels: Wat zijn de casussen voor de andere landen?

Lisa: Voor Nederland gaat het om Oudkerk en De Vries. Voor het verenigd Koninkrijk om Mellor en Paddy Ashdown en tenslotte voor Amerika gaat het om Clinton en Weiner.

Lisa: Wat zijn in uw ogen bijzonderheden voor de relatie tussen politiek en media in Nederland? Wat zijn daarin opvallende verschillen met het Verenigd Koninkrijk?

D. Pels: Ik zit te denken of er veel verschil bestaat tussen Engeland en de Verenigde Staten, die veel verder zijn voortgeschreden als het gaat om de verwevenheid van politiek en media. Dat is in Nederland natuurlijk ook wel het geval. Ik heb zelf een boek geschreven over Pim Fortuyn en zijn optreden was eigenlijk een heel duidelijk bewijs van het feit dat media en politiek verweven zijn geraakt. Dat een soort celebrity-figuur ook in politiek kan treden, zonder een politieke partij te hebben en daar ook succes in te hebben. Dus eigenlijk alleen maar politieke mobilisatie via de media. Fortuyn bewees dat dat mogelijk was. Dus al minstens 10 jaar hebben wij in Nederland die ervaring van de hele intense verwevenheid. Je hebt het in je e-mail ook over de RMO en dat de media logica is doorgedrongen in de politiek. Dit is een goede karakterisering daarvan.

Lisa: Bedankt. U heeft ook een aantal jaren in het Verenigd Koninkrijk gewoond, kunt u opvallende verschillen nomen tussen Nederland en het Verenigd Koninkrijk? Wat u is opgevallen in de kranten of wordt het nieuws op een andere manier gebracht?

D. Pels: Dat verschilt. Amerika is zeker een voorloper van de verweving tussen politiek en media. Mijn ervaring was in Engeland, ook al is dat enige tijd geleden, dat de celebrity cultuur veel belangrijker is. Celebrity cultuur en magazines en tv de hele media wereld is doordrongen van de media logic. Politiek was daar ook bij betrokken, de focus op personen.

Lisa: Ja, het individu wordt steeds belangrijker.

D. Pels: Ja, personen worden steeds belangrijker. Het verschil tussen privé en publiek leven vervaagd, net als bij Fortuyn. Engeland heeft specifieke kenmerken dat de Engelsen nogal een formele cultuur hebben. Dan duurt het heel lang voordat een fout wordt toegegeven. Er wordt ontzettend veel gelogen en vervolgens over de leugen. Voordat de waarheid aan het licht komt duurt het heel lang en als dat dan eenmaal het geval is dan is de val des te groter en dieper. Veel dieper dan in Nederland, voornamelijk omdat de figuren in Engeland zo hoog worden verheven. . In Engeland is het een soort hypocrisie die in de VS en NL niet zo aanwezig is. Meer een cultureel probleem van omgangsvormen. Mensen kunnen hun reputatieverlies daar veel minder ervaren en hun goede naam waardoor ze erg lang en krampachtig vasthouden. Uiteindelijk moeten ze wel toegeven en komt de waarheid wel aan het licht, maar dan is het zo volkomen ongeloofwaardig vanwege die volgehouden hypocrisie. En Nederland en de VS zijn wat eerlijker landen. Gaat er ook hard aan toe. Clinton loog ook enige tijd. In Nederland gaat het vrij snel. Jack de Vries en Oudkerk werden al snel aan de schandpaal genageld.

Lisa: Wat vindt u ervan dat zo iemand als Oudkerk dan af moet treden?

D. Pels: Dat duurt nog veel te lang eigenlijk. Hij heeft zich er ook nog geprobeerd uit te redden, maar zijn reputatie is wel helemaal naar de maan. Die van De Vries eigenlijk niet, omdat het zo'n handige spindoctor is. Oudkerk heeft ook nog wel opgetreden in praatprogramma's, maar van De Vries lijken mensen het wel helemaal vergeten te zijn. Het is ethisch gezien ook minder ingrijpend. Oudkerk ging naar de tippelzone en dat wordt in Nederland minder geaccepteerd dan vrijen met je adjudant. Dat is een mindere doodzonde. In Amerika speelt ook de preutsheid van een land een rol. Je ziet in Nederland dat dit soort affaires minder belangrijk zijn en er veel meer werk wordt gemaakt van zoiets als kindermishandeling, zoals de zaak tegen Robbert M. Preutsheid is in Engeland ook nog wel wat meer aanwezig dan in Nederland. De seksuele revolutie, de sixties, zijn in Amerika veel minder doorgedrongen. Daar is het, afgezien van zo'n schuinsmarcheerder als Clinton, veel lastiger om iets toe te geven. Die details zijn allemaal wel smeugig enzo, maar hij geeft geen jarenlange verhouding gehad. Hij is er ook goed uitgekomen. Het was ook gewoon 'lullig' (om maar eens een verkeerde

uitdrukking te gebruiken). Het is de preutsheid van de Amerikanen en dat hij erover loog en dat hij hele rare woorden gebruikte. Hij ging over definities zeuren. Dat vonden de Amerikanen erger dan wat hij feitelijk had gedaan, met sigaren enzo. Mijn eigen indruk is toch dat die celebrity cultuur sterker is in Engeland dan in de VS. Die indruk had ik wel, maar dat heb ik nooit zo goed kunnen verklaren. Het heeft wel iets te maken met de geschiedenis van de klassenmaatschappij in Engeland. De relaties tussen de klassen zijn nog steeds gesloten. Grote afstand tussen onder en boven in de Engelse cultuur. Vandaar meer geïnteresseerd in mensen die er uit kunnen breken en die het kunnen maken. Het wordt aantrekkelijker gevonden, want er zijn nog zoveel mensen die in armoede leven en die van de benedenkant van de samenleving naar boven kijken. Koningshuis schatrijk en onbereikbaar. Dus misschien zijn het de meer de mensen die niet naar die roem kunnen reiken waardoor ere en grote markt is voor dat soort bladen. Mensen die iets bereiken kunnen ook sneller onderuit gehaald worden, ja dat is een kenmerk. Personen cultuur is belangrijk in de politiek. Persoonlijke reputaties zijn veel belangrijker geworden voor politici. Ze worden niet meer gedragen door hun partij, maar moeten zelf de partij dragen en als ze een foutje maken of slippertje dan komen ze ten val en worden ze ten val gebracht door de media. Daar kan een partij niks aan doen. Zelfs als een volksvertegenwoordiger drie keer is gekozen, als hij een fout maakt of in opspraak raakt dan krijg je het hele circus. Bij bewindspersonen dat de positie onhoudbaar is geworden. Manier van zeggen dat het vertrouwen weg is. Dit is niet onschuldig want als heel veel mensen zeggen, zeker op de tv dat het vertrouwen weg is dan gaat het vertrouwen vanzelf ook weg. En dan is het ook weg. Celebrity cultuur, media cultuur is ook voor een groot deel afhankelijk van de definitie van de situatie, zoals sociologen zouden zeggen. Het is maar hoe je het definieert en dan maak je de voorspelling waar. Je zegt iets of dat iets niet bestaat, maar dat je dat zegt draagt er aan toe bij dat het gebeurt. Merkwaardige logica van de media. Daarom zijn politici tegenwoordig zo bang voor de krantenkoppen waarin staat dat X en Y de positie wankelt. Als heel veel mensen dat zeggen met gezag, dan is de rol sneller uitgespeeld. Dan ligt het er aan hoe de media daar op doorgaan. Hypes, achtervolging van bepaalde personen door de media die op een kluitje gaan voetballen en allemaal gericht zijn op een bepaalde persoon.

Lisa: Ziet u ook dat in de afgelopen jaren de inhoud minder belangrijk worden en de personen meer belangrijk?

D. Pels: Nee dat geloof ik niet. Er is meer een spectrum dat politici, zoals Rita Verdonk die nauwelijks met inhoud op de proppen kwam, maar een vormfiguur had met meer stijl. Aan de andere kant had je Balkenende die inhoud had maar geen vorm. Daartussen in bewegen zich de meeste politici tegenwoordig. Ze moeten iets van beide hebben. Je moet een bepaalde persoonlijkheid hebben met een persoonlijke stijl. Fortuyn is hier een voorbeeld van, die combineerde die twee dingen. Een rechte politieke inhoud, maar was wel inhoud en tegelijkertijd waren die toeters en bellen van hem, die

accessoires zoals hondjes en butlers dat is een extreem voorbeeld van een stijlpoliticus. Iedereen moet daarvan leren in de mediacultuur. Dat je een persoonlijke stempel en accent er op moet drukken en herkenbaar moet zijn als individu.

Lisa: Bedankt, tot zover is alles erg duidelijk. Zijn er misschien nog punten die u kwijt wilt die niet aan de orde zijn gekomen?

D. Pels: Ik denk dat we steeds meer op de landen zijn gaan lijken. Wel later in ontwikkelt. Amerika is de grondlegger. De afstanden zijn in Nederland ook minder groot. Kunnen we de mensen bijna aanraken, veel meer familiair. Ook terug te zien in koningshuis. Brits is veel afstandelijker. Is net zo in de politiek.

Appendix II Personal e-mails

Marc Chavannes

Professor in Journalism (*Universiteit van Groningen*)
Political columnist (*NRC*)
25 April 2013

1. Vindt u dat de media-aandacht rondom het seksschandaal van Oudkerk groter is gemaakt dan nodig?

Of die aandacht 'te' groot was weet ik niet, ik woonde toen in Amerika. Bij 'seksschandalen' geldt m.i. het criterium of het de uitoefening van een publieke functie in gevaar brengt. Als iemand chantabel wordt kan hij/zij niet functioneren. Hetzelfde geldt als iemand misbruik van machtspositie heeft gemaakt, of heeft gehandeld in strijd met openbare politieke uitspraken of beleid. Dat laatste was waarschijnlijk het geval gezien de aanwezigheid van slachtoffers van mensenhandel in de tippelzone.

2. Vindt u het terecht dat Oudkerk zijn functie moest neerleggen als wethouder, omdat de fractie geen vertrouwen meer in hem had?

Zo werkt de democratie: een wethouder/minister legt zijn functie neer als de raad/Kamer geen vertrouwen meer in hem heeft. Of de raad/Kamer daar goed aan deed is een andere zaak, maar wie het vertrouwen verliest vertrekt. In dit geval leek het me ondenkbaar dat de raad had gezegd: privé, niks aan de hand.

3. Hou duidt u de rol van Heleen van Royen in de affaire Oudkerk? Had zij in uw ogen het nieuws over Oudkerk op deze wijze naar buiten mogen/moeten brengen?

Dat hangt er een beetje van af hoe hun verhouding was toen hij in het café zijn onthullingen deed. Als zij bevriend waren is het schending van vertrouwen. Als zij elkaar alleen maar zakelijk kenden is het nog steeds vrij genedaloos om alles wat hij heeft gezegd te publiceren, vooral als tijdens het gesprek er geen sprake van was dat zij daar met een journalistiek oor en oogmerk luisterde.

Guus Valk

Political correspondent (NRC, United States)

17 May 2013

1. Wat zijn bijzonderheden voor de relatie tussen politiek en media in Nederland? Wat zijn daarin opvallende verschillen met het Verenigd Koninkrijk en de Verenigde Staten?

Nederland is allereerst veel kleiner, waardoor politici en Haagse journalisten elkaar goed kennen. Dat maakt de afstand vaak kleiner. Daar staat wel dit tegenover: de pers in de VS is vaak politiek sterker gekleurd. Dat betekent dat het rechtse Fox News veel welwillender ten opzichte van Republikeinen staat, en MSNBC hetzelfde heeft met progressieven. In Nederland is die politieke kleuring veel minder sterk.

2. De RMO heeft een aantal jaar geleden gesteld, dat de media geleid wordt door haar eigen logica in de berichtgeving over politiek. Is dat naar jouw beleving inderdaad het geval en waaraan merk je dat?

Volgens mij ging het om medialogica in de zin dat media de agenda bepalen, de burger voeden en de politiek opzweepen met ‘keiharde maatregelen’ te komen. Dat was in Den Haag, waar ik zeven jaar heb gewerkt, zeker het geval. Soms gaat het per ongeluk en pikt een politicus een onderwerp op. Soms werken media en politici samen: als jij een groot stuk schrijft, kan ik er vragen over stellen. Politiek wordt gedwongen in een keurslijf. Bij iedere ontsnapte TBS'er is de vraag: wat gaat u eraan doen? Een politicus moet dan actie beloven, ook als dat helemaal niet verstandig is.

3. Is naar jouw beleving de rol van personen in de afgelopen jaren toegenomen in de berichtgeving over de politiek? Zo ja, op welke manier is deze toename merkbaar? Welke aspecten van het persoonlijke speelt dan een rol bij politici (charisma, overtuigingskracht, integriteit, persoonlijke leven etc.)? Zo nee, is deze rol dan de afgelopen constant gebleven of afgenomen?

Zeker. Het begon in de VS, al in de jaren zestig. Dat is ook in Nederland doorgegaan. Omdat politieke partijen minder hecht zijn en zoeken naar ideologische basis, is de persoon doorslaggevend voor de keuze van mensen. Zie de snelle neergang van het CDA: kiezerstrouw bestaat niet. In de VS is dat doodnormaal, NL moet daaraan wennen, denk ik. Politici werken het zelf ook in de hand, want meeliften op een leuke lijsttrekker is altijd makkelijker dan een partijprogramma aan de man brengen. Kijk alleen al naar affiches: vroeger was het een logo van de partij, nu is een foto van de lijsttrekker te zien. Het gaat denk ik vooral om charisma, de like-factor. Net zo belangrijk: het vermogen een persoonlijkheid te koppelen aan een wereldbeeld. Femke Halsema (op het oog een aardig, groen, liberaal, ruimdenkend persoon) en Geert Wilders zijn daar meesters in.

4. In mijn scriptie ga ik in op de wijze waarop de berichtgeving plaatsvindt in de drie landen over politieke seksschandalen. In de afgelopen tien jaar heeft Nederland een aantal schandalen gekend dat de nationale pers heeft gehaald, zoals Rob Oudkerk en Jack de Vries. Wat is jou opgevallen bij de berichtgeving over deze zaken in Nederland? Zou dat in het Verenigd Koninkrijk of de Verenigde Staten anders zijn geweest als deze gebeurtenissen daar hadden plaatsgevonden?

De kwestie-Oudkerk werd stevig op de man gespeeld, en het is denk ik voor het eerst dat een politicus het op dit thema zo zwaar te verduren had. Ook de Vries moest het ontgelden, zij het in iets mindere mate. Ik vond het lijken op Amerikaanse seksschandalen. Zie de affaire-Anthony Weiner: alle details

komen naar buiten, het is nooit te gek. Dan zou je denken: dat ga je in NL ook steeds meer zien. Maar dat denk ik niet. Buitenechtelijke affaires waren in Nederland overigens nooit echt relevant: wie weet van het vreemdgaan van Job Cohen, de roddels over Melkert, enzovoort? Bijna niemand. In de VS gaat de hakbijl erin, zeker ook bij vreemdgaan. Dat past ook wel in de puriteinse cultuur van huwelijkse trouw, terwijl NL meer om leven en laten leven gaat. Iets als het vreemdgaan van John Edwards, een heel grote kwestie hier, zou in NL niet zo hoog gespeeld worden.

Karen Zandbergen

Chief Editor Politics (*Trouw*)

17 May 2013

1. Wat zijn bijzonderheden voor de relatie tussen politiek en media in Nederland? Wat zijn daarin opvallende verschillen met het Verenigd Koninkrijk en de Verenigde Staten?

Vergelijkingen met het buitenland kan ik niet maken. Ik weet niet meer van de verhouding tussen politiek en media daar dan ik in onze kranten lees of op kan maken uit series als West Wing of Borgen. Met alleen die informatie kan ik onmogelijk een goed beeld hebben. Wat ik zelf bijzonder vind (dus niet wetend of dit internationaal bijzonder is), is de informaliteit waarmee politici en journalisten met elkaar omgaan. We weten vrij veel prive over elkaar en al lijkt het soms voor buitenstaanders niet zo, politici beschadigen om wat ze prive doen zullen journalisten niet snel doen. Één voorbeeld: onder journalisten was een paar jaar geleden vrij algemeen bekend dat een getrouwd Kamerlid zich tegen betaling liet pijpen door jongens/jonge mannen. De Telegraaf had er bewijs voor en heeft lang getwijfeld of ze er over zou schrijven. Dat heeft de krant niet gedaan. De exacte redenen die een journalist van de Telegraaf mij vertelde weet ik helaas niet meer, maar voor die krant een opvallende keuze. Over de handtastelijkheden van Balkenende is ook weinig geschreven en Lubbers kwam pas in het nieuws met zijn bejegening van vrouwen toen dat internationaal speelde. Ik denk dat dit nog verder gaat veranderen en dat hier eerder over zal worden geschreven, mede door de toenemende druk op media om lezers/kijkers te binden/binnen te halen.

2. De RMO heeft een aantal jaar geleden gesteld, dat de media geleid wordt door haar eigen logica in de berichtgeving over politiek. Is dat naar jouw beleving inderdaad het geval en waaraan merk je dat?

Ik weet niet hoe de RMO dat precies bedoelde, maar ik kan me er wel iets bij voorstellen. Misschien doelt de RMO op de eigen dynamiek die nieuws kan krijgen? Of iets groot nieuws wordt of klein blijft heeft lang niet alleen te maken met de ‘objectieve’ importantie ervan. Makkelijk voorbeeld zijn nieuwsluwe tijden: de rel rond Wijnand Duyvendak werd mede zo groot doordat hij in augustus kwam, toen er verder weinig nieuws was. Maar het gaat ook om een ander soort timing. Als de Volkskrant de krant opent met Sybrand Buma die kritisch over Europa is, hollen alle journalisten hier achteraan waardoor het vanzelf groot wordt. Terwijl hij inhoudelijk niets nieuws heeft gezegd. Het gaat dan om het moment waarop hij zijn statement uit, hoe collega's van hem, maar vooral hoe journalisten hier op reageren waardoor het een eigen dynamiek krijgt. Geen medium wil achterblijven want het is nieuws geworden omdat journalisten dat zelf er van maken. Nieuwsitems die op zichzelf heel opzienbarend zijn kunnen snel uit de aandacht verdwijnen als ze niet zo'n swing meekrijgen. Er valt veel meer over te zeggen, maar dan zou ik moeten weten wat de RMO precies bedoelde.

3. Is naar jouw beleving de rol van personen in de afgelopen jaren toegenomen in de berichtgeving over de politiek? Zo ja, op welke manier is deze toename merkbaar? Welke aspecten van het persoonlijke speelt dan een rol bij politici (charisma, overtuigingskracht, integriteit, persoonlijke leven etc.)? Zo nee, is deze rol dan de afgelopen constant gebleven of afgenomen?

De druk om over personen te schrijven is in ieder geval wel toegenomen. Als Trouw schreven we bewust niet over de nieuwe vriendin van staatssecretaris Bleker (ze is meerderjarig, Bleker is gescheiden dus het heeft geen invloed op zijn politieke positie) of over de homoseksualiteit van minister De Jager (niet relevant). Daar is wel veel discussie over op de redactie. Vooral over de vraag wat wel en niet relevant is en waarom. We kunnen steeds minder goed om dit soort nieuws heen, al is de politieke redactie zelf er in meerderheid op tegen. Sinds kort hebben we een personaliarubriek

waarin je dit makkelijker (kort, feitelijk) kan melden. Dan nog moet elke keer een afweging worden gemaakt, maar de grens verschuift langzaam. Ik denk dat de toenemende belangstelling voor de persoon achter de politicus mede komt door de presentatie van politici zelf. Ze proberen hun verhaal vaker te verkopen met een verwijzing naar hun persoonlijke leven. Maar de interesse is er denk ik altijd al wel geweest en bij media die steeds meer moeite moeten doen om klanten vast te houden of te trekken is meer het gevoel aan wensen te moeten voldoen. De aanname/arrogantie dat de journalist wel bepaalt wat een lezer moet weten en wat niet is in korte tijd verdwenen. Vooral jongere journalisten zijn veel meer servicegericht, voor zover ik dat in mijn niet-representatieve omgeving zie. Charisma en overtuigingskracht speelt in de berichtgeving voor een heel groot deel impliciet mee. Ik denk dat dit altijd zo geweest is. Een journalist belt politici om hun mening te verwoorden om de machtsfactor die ze vertegenwoordigen én als hij denkt dat diegene een goed verhaal kan houden. Wie niet integer handelt, wordt hiermee geconfronteerd. Dit was denk ik altijd al zo. Al wordt nieuws nu wel al eerder expliciet geduid waar tien jaar geleden nog vaker objectief verslag werd gedaan van debatten (al geloof ik niet dat pure objectieve verslaggeving mogelijk is, maar dat is weer iets anders).

4. In mijn scriptie ga ik in op de wijze waarop de berichtgeving plaatsvindt in de drie landen over politieke seksschandalen. In de afgelopen tien jaar heeft Nederland een aantal schandalen gekend dat de nationale pers heeft gehaald, zoals Rob Oudkerk en Jack de Vries. Wat is jou opgevallen bij de berichtgeving over deze zaken in Nederland? Zou dat in het Verenigd Koninkrijk of de Verenigde Staten anders zijn geweest als deze gebeurtenissen daar hadden plaatsgevonden?

Wat ik me herinner is dat beide onderwerpen vrij breed zijn uitgemeten. Bij Oudkerk omdat hij een lijn over was gegaan door het type prostituee dat hij uitzocht. Bij Jack de Vries omdat het een werkrelatie was (en hij bij een Christelijke partij zit en getrouwd was). Volgens mij is er vrij weinig discussie geweest over de vraag of media hier wel over moesten berichten. Wat ik me nog herinner is dat de Telegraaf foto's publiceert van De Vries en zijn vriendin. Verder weet ik nog weinig bijzonderheden over de manier van berichtgeving. Ik kan weinig zeggen over de VK en VS.

Jeroen Visser

Editor politics (*De Volkskrant*)

12 May 2013

1. Wat zijn bijzonderheden voor de relatie tussen politiek en media in Nederland? Wat zijn daarin opvallende verschillen met het Verenigd Koninkrijk en de Verenigde Staten?

In Nederland bestaat een innige relatie tussen politiek en media. Illustratief daarvoor is dat journalisten na ontvangst van een Kamerpas vrijelijk door bijna de gehele Tweede Kamer kunnen lopen. Het is heel normaal dat journalisten 'een rondje' doen door de Kamer, waarbij ze langs de kamers van de Kamerleden lopen voor een paar vragen. Net zo makkelijk sms-en journalisten en politici elkaar of ontmoeten ze elkaar voor een borrel of een maaltijd, niet noodzakelijk in Nieuwspoort alleen. Politici zijn erbij gebaat dat ze in het nieuwe komen en dus loont het voor hun ook om goed contact te onderhouden met het journaal. Voor journalisten geldt: politieke verslaggeving is toch vooral het bouwen aan je netwerk. Nieuws verkrijgt je dikwijls van politici of voorlichters zelf en daarbij speelt de gunfactor een belangrijke rol. Ik schat in dat dit in het VK en in Washington niet anders is, al viel me onlangs op bij een bezoek aan Westminster op dat journalisten daar niet overal mogen komen. Het is daar naar verluidt ook minder gebruikelijk dat journalisten spontaan aankloppen bij de Britse parlementariërs.

2. De RMO heeft een aantal jaar geleden gesteld, dat de media geleid wordt door haar eigen logica in de berichtgeving over politiek. Is dat naar jouw beleving inderdaad het geval en waaraan merk je dat?

Ik merk zelf dat de Haagse verslaggeving vooral draait om het nieuwsgagen en de waan van de dag. Vaak is er een onderwerp van de week waar iedereen zich op stort, bijvoorbeeld het bekendmaken van de CPB-cijfers of de positie van een staatssecretaris. Daarbij zie je de volgende systematiek: de media berichten over een incident (fraude met toeslagen door Bulgaren), de Kamer reageert met Kamervragen en aanvullende vragen (die de media weer verslaan) en de media speculeren over de positie van de staatssecretaris, waar de Kamerleden weer gretig op inhaken. Het werkelijke nieuws, de fraude, raakt al snel ondergesneeuwd in de verslaggeving.

Zo gaat het vaak, media en politiek dansen de tombola en profiteren van elkaar. Ondertussen worden in kleine vergaderzalen grote beslissingen genomen over andere kwesties, maar daar is vaak minder oog voor.

3. Is naar jouw beleving de rol van personen in de afgelopen jaren toegenomen in de berichtgeving over de politiek? Zo ja, op welke manier is deze toename merkbaar? Welke aspecten van het persoonlijke speelt dan een rol bij politici (charisma, overtuigingskracht, integriteit, persoonlijke leven etc.)? Zo nee, is deze rol dan de afgelopen constant gebleven of afgenomen?

Dat vind ik een lastige kwestie. Ik kan me herinneren van vroeger dat de persoonlijkheden van Hans Wiegel en Wim Kok ook in de belangstelling stonden, ook toen voerden partijen campagne met hun hoofden op de posters. Er is wel een duidelijke toename in de hoeveelheid media die de politiek verslaan. Iedereen zegt altijd wel dat sinds Pim Fortuyn er een persoonlijkheidscultus is ontstaan, maar daarna kregen we toch maar mooi 8 jaar Jan Peter Balkenende, die lastig te bewonderen is vanwege een groot charisma, laat staan persoonlijk leven of integriteit. Wilders is misschien een beter voorbeeld, maar aan de andere kant heeft Wilders eerder het imago van een boze man dan een leuke vent. Toch doet hij het goed, maar dat komt vooral omdat hij een van de beste politici is op het binnenhof. Ik denk vooral dat de berichtgeving is toegenomen en onvermijdelijk is er dan ook meer

aandacht voor de politieke leiders. Daarnaast is er steeds meer aandacht gekomen voor politieke analyses, waarin de journalist vaak het gedrag van de politieke leiders moet duiden. Welke kapstop hiervoor gebruikt wordt (charisma, overtuigingskracht, integriteit, persoonlijke leven), varieert per journalist.

4. In mijn scriptie ga ik in op de wijze waarop de berichtgeving plaatsvindt in de drie landen over politieke seksschandalen. In de afgelopen tien jaar heeft Nederland een aantal schandalen gekend dat de nationale pers heeft gehaald, zoals Rob Oudkerk en Jack de Vries. Wat is jou opgevallen bij de berichtgeving over deze zaken in Nederland? Zou dat in het Verenigd Koninkrijk of de Verenigde Staten anders zijn geweest als deze gebeurtenissen daar hadden plaatsgevonden?

Ik heb de berichtgeving hierover indertijd niet van dichtbij meegemaakt, maar ik weet dat in het Verenigd Koninkrijk minder scrupules zijn om buitenechtelijke affaires tot op de bodem te uit te zoeken. Hier gebeurt dat minder. Het feit dat Oudkerk heroïnehoeren heeft bezocht is voor de meeste lezers hier voldoende. We gaan niet op zoek naar alle details, ook niet over de vrouw met wie Jack de Vries vreemdging. In Engeland is dat wel anders.

Rob Oudkerk

21 April 2013

Geachte heer Oudkerk,

Voor mijn studie 'European Studies' aan De Haagse Hogeschool schrijf ik een scriptie over de relatie tussen politiek en media bij seksschandalen in Nederland, het Verenigd Koninkrijk en de Verenigde Staten. Om tot antwoorden te komen, gebruik ik voorbeelden van politici die een dergelijke situatie hebben meegemaakt en wat zij vinden van de interactie tussen politiek en media. Ik vroeg mij af of u bereid bent tot het beantwoorden van een aantal vragen. Dat zou mij enorm helpen. De beantwoording van de vragen kan in een gesprek of via de e-mail. Graag zou ik van u willen weten wat uw mening en persoonlijke ervaringen zijn over de verhoudingen tussen politiek en media bij seksschandalen. Om u een idee te geven van de vragen die ik u wil stellen, heb ik een drietal vragen opgenomen:

Kunt u een beschrijving geven van de berichtgeving in de media toen uw verhaal naar buiten kwam?

Op welke wijze werd er binnen de politiek (en in het bijzonder uw eigen partij) gereageerd op de berichtgeving en welke consequenties had dat?

Wat is de betekenis geweest van de berichten voor uw loopbaan als politicus?

Ik hoor graag van u.

Hartelijke groet,

Lisa van Meegen

Beste Lisa,

Vervelend voor jou, maar mijn policy is dat ik niet meer meewerk aan zaken die een ver verleden betreffen en geen relatie meer hebben met mijn leven en werk in het heden.

Ik wens je succes met je scriptie.

Hartelijks,

Rob Oudkerk

Jack de Vries

29 April 2013

Geachte heer De Vries,

Voor mijn studie 'European Studies' aan De Haagse Hogeschool schrijf ik een scriptie over de relatie tussen politiek en media bij seksschandalen in Nederland, het Verenigd Koninkrijk en de Verenigde Staten. Om tot antwoorden te komen, gebruik ik voorbeelden van politici die een dergelijke situatie hebben meegemaakt en wat zij vinden van de interactie tussen politiek en media. Ik vroeg mij af of u bereid bent tot het beantwoorden van een aantal vragen. Dat zou mij enorm helpen. De beantwoording van de vragen kan in een gesprek of via de e-mail. Graag zou ik van u willen weten wat uw mening en persoonlijke ervaringen zijn over de verhoudingen tussen politiek en media bij seksschandalen. Om u een idee te geven van de vragen die ik u wil stellen, heb ik een drietal vragen opgenomen:

Kunt u een beschrijving geven van de berichtgeving in de media toen uw verhaal naar buiten kwam?

Op welke wijze werd er binnen de politiek (en in het bijzonder uw eigen partij) gereageerd op de berichtgeving en welke consequenties had dat?

Wat is de betekenis geweest van de berichten voor uw loopbaan als politicus?

Ik hoor graag van u.

Hartelijke groet,

Lisa van Meegen

Beste Lisa,

Dank voor je verzoek.

Dat je mijn verhaal typeert als een "sekschandaal" vind ik teleurstellend.

Maar los daarvan heb ik geen behoefte mee te werken aan een dergelijk onderzoek.

Goede groet,

Jack de Vries

Appendix III Online Questionnaire

1. What is your age?

- a. 12 to 18
- b. 19 to 25
- c. 26 to 40
- d. 40 years or older

2. What is your sex?

- a. Male
- b. Female

3. What is your highest degree?

- a. VMBO
- b. MAVO
- c. HAVO
- d. VWO
- e. MBO
- f. HBO
- g. WO

4. Where do you get your news? Please choose per item between very much, much, not much not little, little and very little.

- a. Newspapers
- b. Radio
- c. Television
- d. Social Media
- e. News Web sites
- f. Weblogs
- g. Personal conversations

5. What kind of news do you consider the most interesting?

- a. Crime
- b. National politics
- c. World politics
- d. Human interest
- e. Gossip
- f. Sports

6. How much time do you spend on newsgathering on a weekly basis?

- a. Less than 2 hours

- b. 2 to 5 hours
- c. 5 to 10 hours
- d. More than 10 hours

7. Do you prefer the public or the commercial channels?

- a. Public
- b. Commercial
- c. Both

8. What characteristics describe a politician in your opinion?

- a. Reliable
- b. Honest
- c. Representative
- d. Loyal
- e. Ambitious
- f. Mean
- g. Unreliable
- h. Someone who abuses its position for money
- i. Someone who looks after your interests
- j. Something else

9. What do you think of politicians that appear in the news for having (had) a (possible) extramarital affair?

- a. They must resign
- b. They should be able to keep their job
- c. They do not have to resign, but should get a sanction
- d. That is their own responsibility
- e. That does not interest me

10. Is it worse for a politician to get involved in a sex scandal than when a movie star gets involved?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. It is the same

11. Is it worse for a politician to get involved in a sex scandal than when a postar gets involved?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. It is the same

12. Is it worse for a politician to get involved in a sex scandal than when a teacher gets involved?

- a. Yes

- b. No
- c. It is the same

13. Is it worse for a politician to get involved in a sex scandal than when a community worker gets involved?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. It is the same

14. Is it worse for a politician to get involved in a sex scandal than when a journalist or presenter gets involved?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. It is the same

15. Is it worse for a politician to get involved in a sex scandal than when a CEO gets involved?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. It is the same

16. In your opinion, does it matter that the concerned politician is married?

- a. Yes
- b. No

17. In your opinion, do media differ between these jobs in the previous questions?

- a. Yes
- b. No

18. Do media have a stake in the developments regarding political sex scandals?

- a. Yes
- b. No

19. If you answered yes in the previous question, in what way do media have a stake?

Appendix IV Tables

	Very much	Much	Not much not little	Little	Very little	Not applicable
Newspapers	6	18	12	11	7	0
Radio	3	14	11	14	11	1
Television	6	27	12	5	4	0
Social Media	9	16	14	3	9	3
News Web Sites	20	18	6	5	2	3
Weblogs	2	5	9	11	15	12
Personal conversation	6	26	17	2	2	1

Table 1: Where do you get your news?

Appendix V Graphics

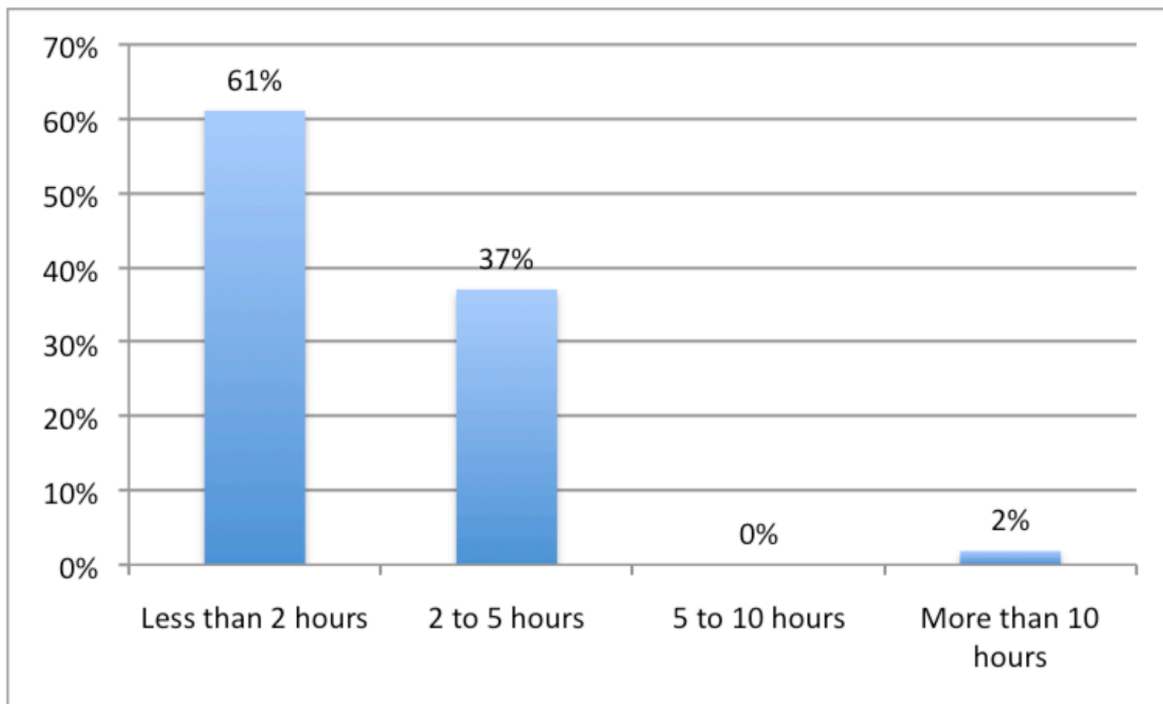


Figure 1: How much time do you spend on newsgathering on a weekly basis?

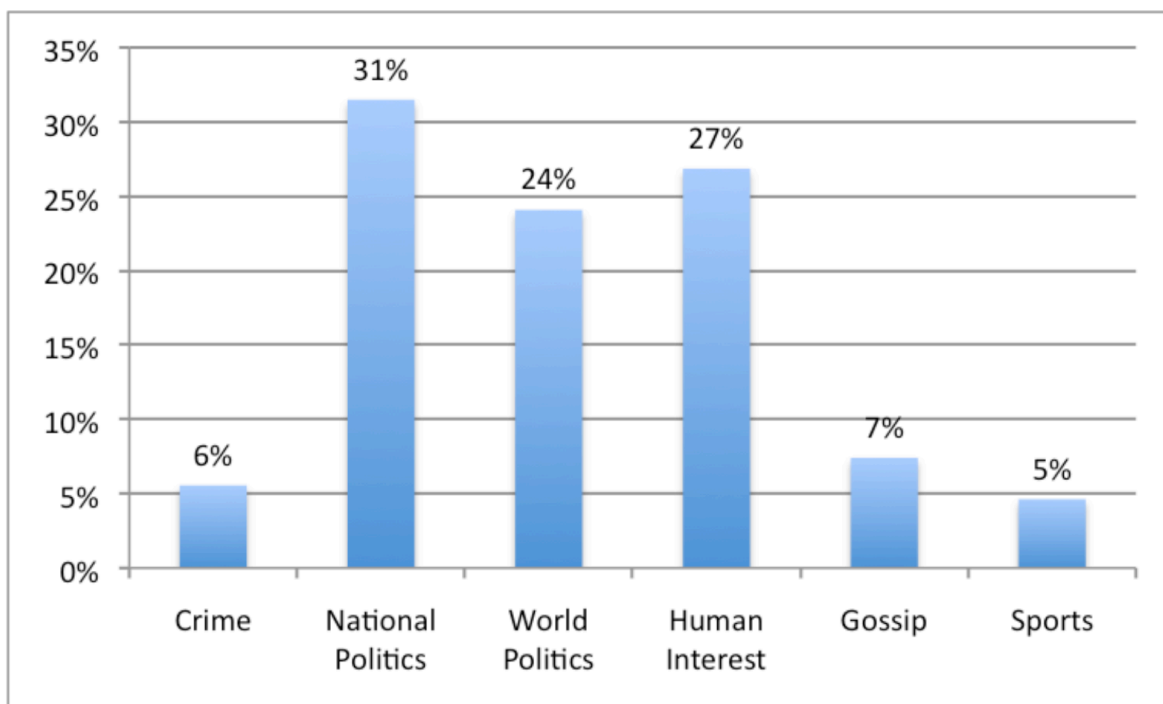


Figure 2: What kind of news are you interested in?

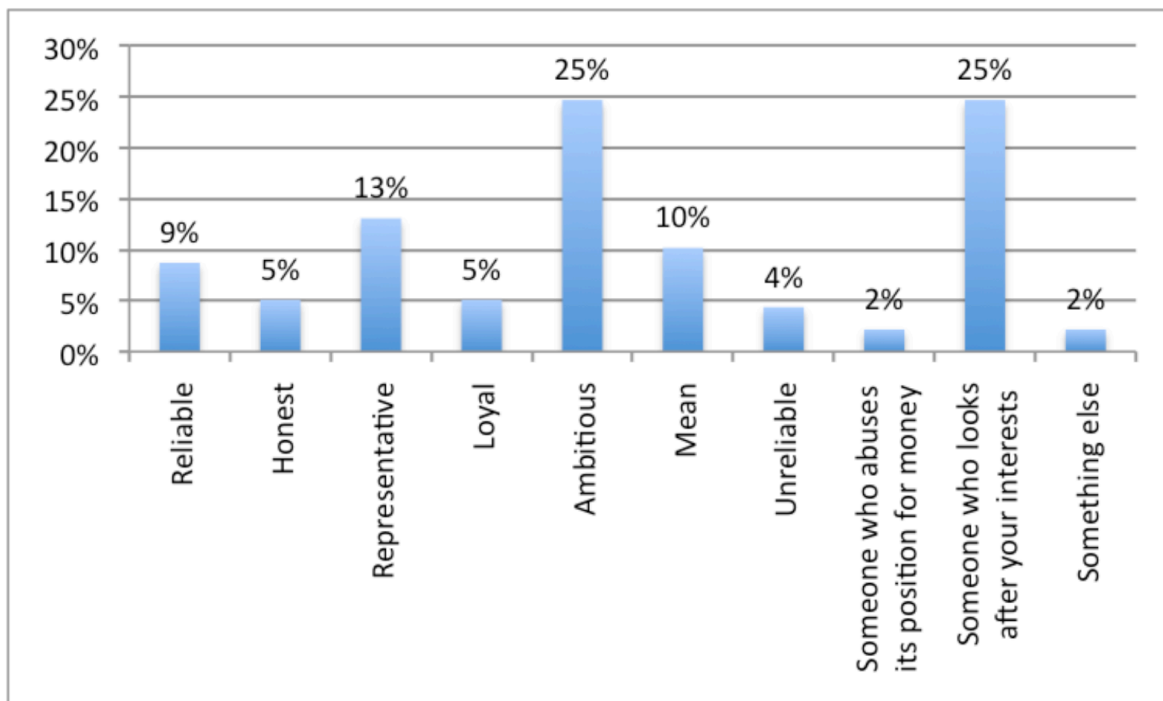


Figure 3: What characteristics describe a politician in your opinion?

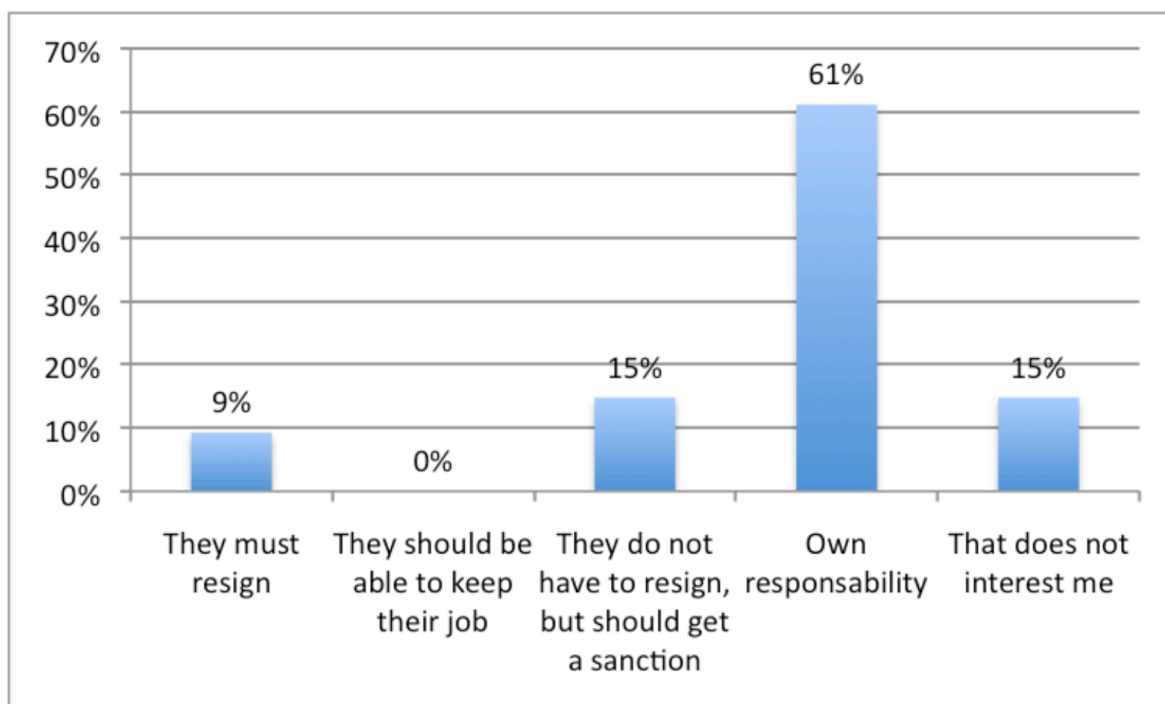


Figure 4: What do you think of politicians that appear in the news for having (had) a (possible) extramarital affair?

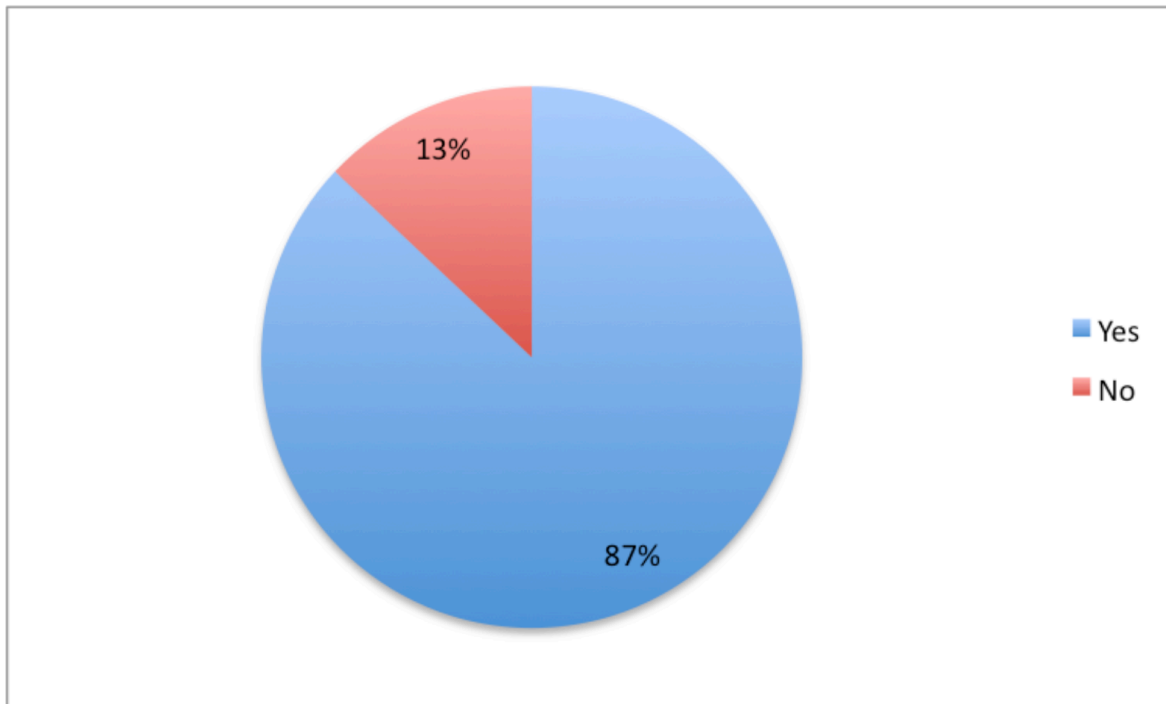


Figure 5: Do media have a stake in the developments regarding political sex scandals?

Appendix VI Ephorus check

Beste Lisa van Meegen,

Je document is ingeleverd bij Ephorus en je docent Rajash Rawal (R.Rawal@hhs.nl) is hiervan op de hoogte gesteld.

Dit is de bevestiging; we raden je aan om deze e-mail op te slaan of uit te printen.

Bevestiging:

Unieke code: 80a86f53-edd3-4181-9172-60953634dad8

Inlevercode: R.Rawal@hhs.nl

Vaknaam: R.Rawal@hhs.nl

Datum: [21-05-2013 06:05](#)

Docent:

Naam: Rajash Rawal

E-mail adres: R.Rawal@hhs.nl

Jouw gegevens:

Naam: Lisa van Meegen

Studentnummer: 09004297

E-mail adres: lavanmeegen@gmail.com